

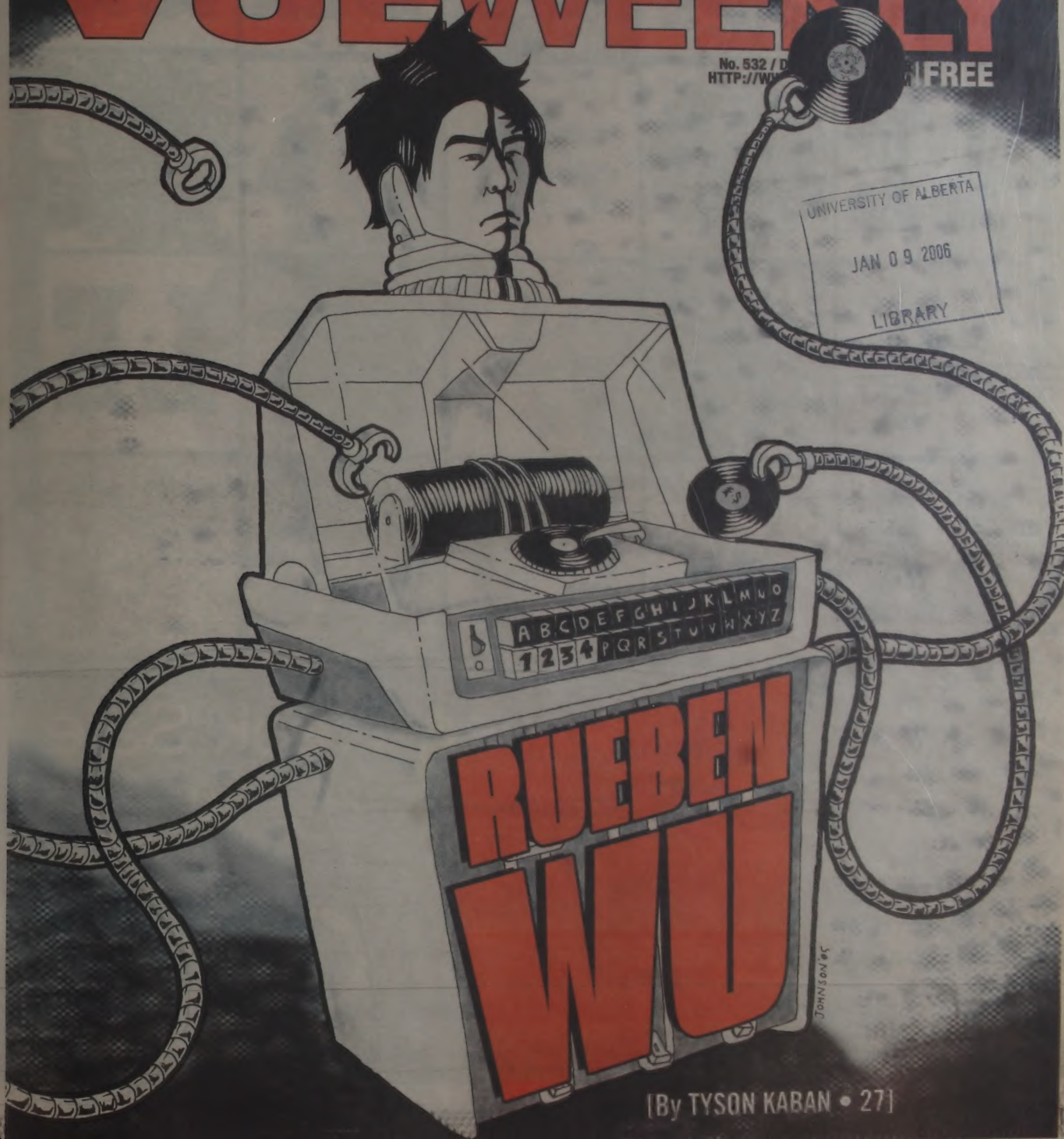
FRONT: NEWS BLOGGING • 7 / MUSIC: CHAD VANGAALAN • 33 / ARTS: SONG OF SONGS • 39

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[By TYSON KABAN • 27]



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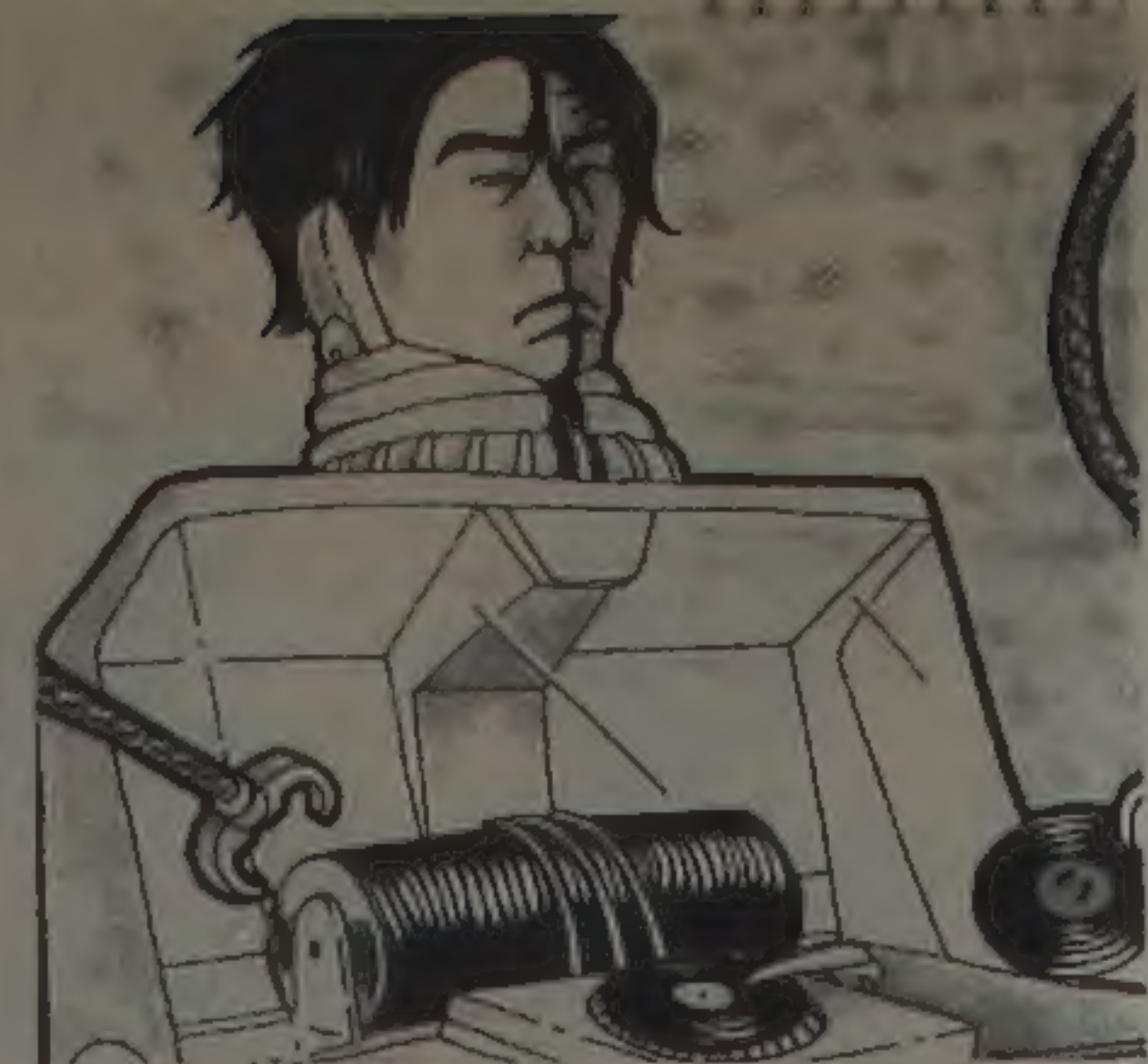
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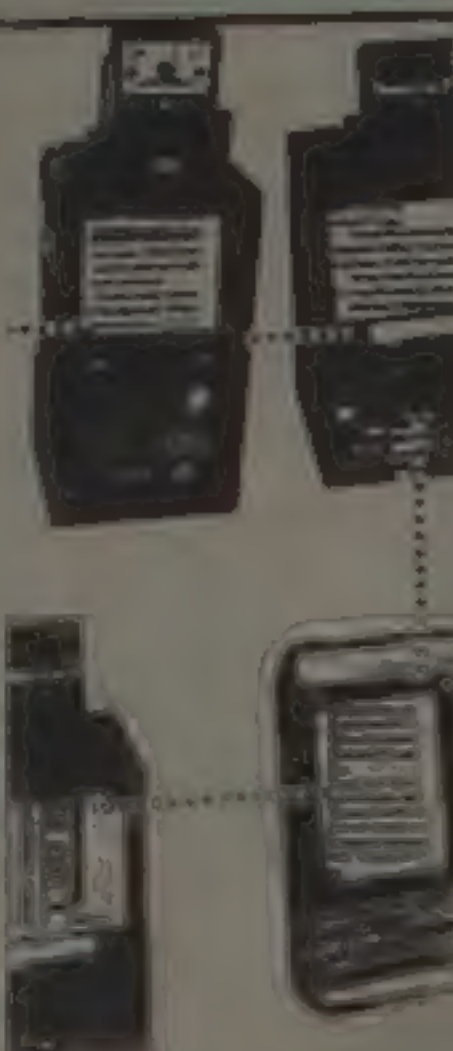
ON THE COVER

Reuben Wu of British eletroclash group Ladytron comes to Edmonton for a New Year's DJ set at the Starlite, but he stays for the Canadian beer. Except, I guess, when he doesn't stay... as will likely be the case the day after the show, probably. Anyhow, he likes beer. And DJing. Check it! • 27



FRONT

Take back the news: how blogs are changing information culture • 7



MUSIC

Chad VanGalen plus New Year's equals WHOO! • 33



ARTS

Song of Songs: Artist Tsilla Barzel doesn't see dead people, but her paintings do talk back • 39



Paging Peter Lorre

Stephen D. Youngkin rediscovers Hollywood's glamour-era villain in *The Lost One*

By JOSEF BRAUN

I'm stuck in the middle seat of a plane, and the guy next to me glances at the hefty volume in my hands and asks what I'm reading. "A biography of Peter Lorre," I tell him. His brow furrows; he asks, "Who's Peter Lorre?" I mention *The Maltese Falcon* and *Casablanca*; I mention the wide-set, bulgy eyes. "Trust me," I say, "you'd know him if you saw

him." But then the guy adopts a vague central European accent and softly hisses, "Oh, yesssss, Meester Lorre." Okay, maybe you'd know him if you *heard* him.

Lorre leapt from the Berlin stage to the silver screen in the morning of the sound era, a time when cinema was discovering its voices, voices so brimming with character they

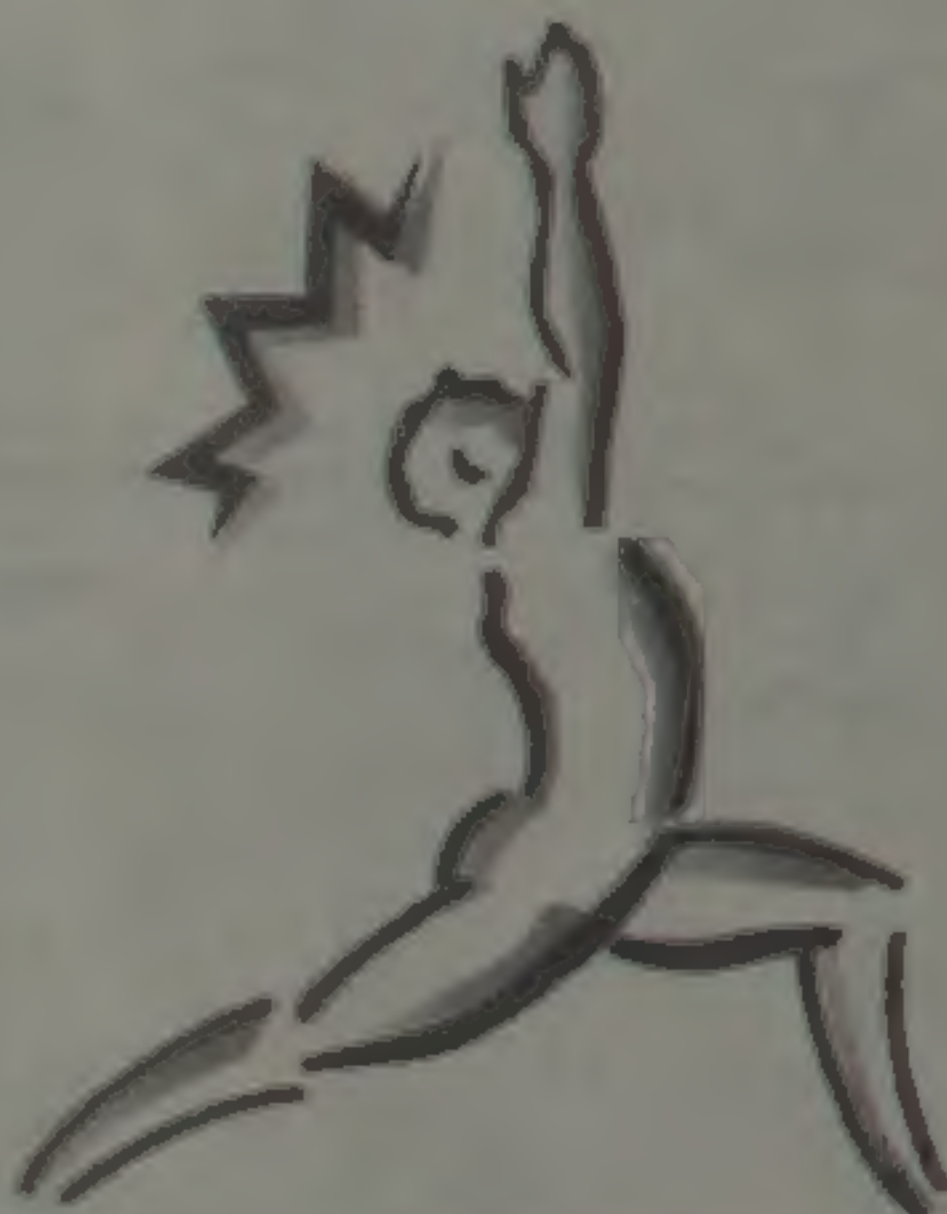
Lorre's performance, at once terrifying and sympathetic, was so convincing he got fan mail from psychopaths. Excerpts of the movie were later exploited by the Nazis in anti-Semitic propaganda films (Lorre was a Jew). People who hadn't even seen *M* knew who Lorre was and swiftly fled in the opposite direction with their children.

Despite his talent, range and fame, Lorre's inability to shed the shadow of Hans Beckert is one of the twin melancholy refrains in Stephen D. Youngkin's *The Lost One: A Life of Peter Lorre*, a lovingly researched, much needed examination of Lorre's troubled life. Even after a quarter-century as one of the most familiar personalities in Hollywood, Lorre was perpetually being

SEE PAGE 11

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in the box

BY DAVID YOUNG
AND TB PLAYER

Thanks to the Christmas break, only two games have gone down since the last Vue Weekly. The Oilers extended their winning streak to five games with a 5-3 win over the L.A. Kings on December 22, only to see it end with a 4-1 Boxing Day Blowout at the hands of the Minnesota Wild, which also finished off the Oilers' tidy little 10-game point streak. TB and Dave discuss this and other hockey topics.

The game is afoot It was a little treat for Oil fans over Christmas to see the team take first place in the Northwest Division. But, unlike TB's undergarments, the standings will likely change often, as only five points separated first place from second last in the tight Northwest Division as of last Tuesday night. (DY)

A trap by any other name Anyone who thinks the trap is a thing of the past should watch Minnesota play; while it's no longer just a useful tool for teams stuck with slow, immobile players (i.e. Cory Cross), it's now an effective system for teams with speedy players, allowing the defending team to drop back and let opponents come to them. If and when

the opponents lose the puck, they turn the play around so quickly you end up giving up an inordinate amount of odd-man rushes. After a pair of thrilling games against Calgary and Vancouver, Monday's tilt reminded me why I once vowed to punch Minnesota coach Jacques Lemaire in or around the crotch area. The man has a brilliant hockey mind, knows how to shut offenses down and it's obvious he hasn't paid to be entertained at a hockey game in far too long—but after the underwear comment above, I've got someone new on my cock-punching list. (TB)

Greatness thrust upon them. The Canadian Olympic team has been selected, with not too many surprises. I was expecting Todd Bertuzzi to make the team regardless of what many people were saying, and I'm thrilled that Canada once again called on Ryan (Captain Canada) Smyth. Biggest disappointment? Jeremy Roenick, left out by the American team, won't be in Torino to whine about losing. (TB)

We band of brothers As promised, here's the *In The Box* Canada II roster, made up of Canadian players who missed the cut. We were selfishly pro-Edmonton in our picks and left out Eric Staal, Jason Spezza and Bryan McCabe (already on the Olympic taxi squad) and any Calgary Flames (sorry Dion Phaneuf).

Goal: Jose Theodore, Curtis Joseph, Martin Biron

Defence: Marc-Andre Bergeron, Jason Smith, Dan Boyle, Chris Phillips, Eric Brewer, Eric Desjardins, Jay Bouwmeester

Centre: Jarret Stoll, Patrick Marleau, Sidney Crosby, Marc Savard

Wingers: Raffi Torres, Glen Murray, Alex Tanguay, Brendan Shanahan, Brenden Morrow, Brendan Morrison, Michael Ryder, Steve Sullivan, Mark Recchi, Mike Johnson, Paul Kariya, Scott Walker, Andrew Brunette

Really doesn't look like a bad team, does it? (DY, TB)

In The Box facts about the 2006 Men's Olympic Hockey team

Number of players from the 2002 Gold Medal squad: 10

Number of Stanley Cups combined: 16

Number of World Cup Gold medals: 23

Number of World Championship Gold medals: 18

Number of World Junior Championship Gold medals: 8

Average age: 27.56

Combined years NHL experience: 188

Players born in: Alberta (4); Ontario (9);

Quebec (5); B.C. (2); Saskatchewan,

P.E.I. (1); Brazil (Robyn Regehr)

Players from: Canadian NHL teams (8); American (15)

Players with no NHL playoff experience: 3 (Luongo, Heatley, Nash)

Left-handed shots: 16; Righties: 4

First-round draft picks (18); Second,

Third, Fourth, Fifth (1); not drafted (1

—Martin St. Louis)

First overall draft picks: 3

Hart Trophy and Norris Trophy winners

(3); Calder, Conn Smythe, Lady Byng,

Rocket Richard Trophy winners (2);

Vezina, Art Ross winners (1)

Named after Catholic saints: 12

On same team entire career: 12

On EA Sports NHL videogame covers: 5

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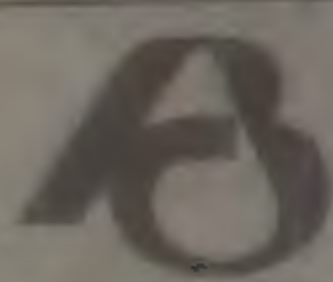
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New Year's Resolutions?

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GRADY 2005



news roundup

BY CHRIS BOUTET

HEALTHCARE: DUMB!

Though conceding that the whole "third way" thing has been a little bit of a tough sell in the past, Premier Ralph Klein restated his determination to reform public healthcare on Monday, noting that he feels has the support of the average Albertan.

"I think Martha and Henry are more on-board because they are starting to understand how serious this is," Klein said in his annual year-end interview with the *Edmonton Sun*. "Unless we cut the costs, the system won't be there."

As such, the Premier says he's more determined than ever to introduce reforms this spring that will shift more of the cost of medical services onto patients. According to Klein, such reforms are needed due to the fact that healthcare costs are "going up at twice the rate of inflation," with Alberta currently spending \$9 billion annually on healthcare delivery, \$1.6 billion of which comes from the federal government. The Tories have stated they want to hold the province's health costs at 37 per cent of the provincial budget, which they hope to achieve with a system that would require Albertans to buy insurance for services that are currently covered by the province.

As for all those people who have expressed concern over the implementation off an American-style two-tiered system, Klein expressed dismay that so many people seem willing to cling onto such outdated notions as "burden

of the state" and "social responsibility." "We still have the Raging Grannies and the Friends of Medicare and the people who think they can maintain the status quo, but they're dreaming in Technicolor," he said.

Also consumed by that crazy pipe dream of a society that uses taxation to pay for blanket social programs are the Alberta Liberal and NDP oppositions, both of whom told the *Sun* they're gearing up for a major battle in the spring. "We're assuming there will be some controversial healthcare legislation brought in, and if it's a threat to our single-payer public system, we'll fight it tooth and nail," said Liberal Leader Kevin Taft, adding that after recording an \$8 billion surplus over the past year, Klein will probably have a hard time convincing voters that Alberta can't continue with public delivery alone. "I think Albertans should legitimately be asking: If we can't afford healthcare in Alberta today, when can we ever afford it?"

ARMIES: EVERYWHERE!

Meanwhile, on the campaign trail, Conservative Leader Stephen Harper continued to awkwardly sputter whatever sequence of nouns and verbs seemed to make the most sense to him at the time this week, stating that he wants to beef up military presence in Canada's major metropolitan areas to help maintain sovereignty and deal with emergencies that may arise.

According to a report from the Canadian Press on Tuesday, Harper took time out from his tour of coastal B.C. to outline his military proposal, which would see "territorial defence units" consisting of 100 regular troops and 400 or more reservists stationed in Vancouver, Calgary, Regina, Winnipeg, Toronto, among others, that would help protect Canada's self-interests and provide a handy jumping-off point if Canadian forces are needed to help out with conflicts in other countries.

"This is the full military presence that Western Canada currently lacks," Harper told reporters. "Obviously, we would anticipate that its domestic need would be in case of disaster, but they would also be military forces that could be forward deployed in the event of more serious military conflict elsewhere."

The proposed units are part of Harper's larger promise to increase military spending by \$5.3 billion over what is currently budgeted for the next five years. The defence of Canada's west coast and its fishing routes and other off-shore resources is a major component of the proposal, which also calls for the deployment of icebreakers to patrol Arctic seaways, as well as an increase of Pacific navy personnel by about 500 regulars and a boost to the air force's surveillance capability.

Initial reaction to Harper's statement, however, was skeptical. "This is nuts, dispersing penny-packets of troops in major cities," commented military historian Jack Granatstein in an interview with the *Toronto Star*. "It makes more sense to build up reserves."

Actually, it probably makes more sense to spend that money on our faltering social programs, really. But hey.

SEARCHES: TALLIED!

Well, with the new year comes yet another spate of news stories on the top five Google searches of the past 12 months, which once again proved that people are interested in incredibly stupid things.

As expected, Janet Jackson's nipple was the reigning queen of online popularity in 2005, with her child-cuddling brother coming in a close second. Also the subject of our fleeting fancies and insatiable thirst for news that isn't actually news were movie stars Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt. Remember them? They were in Edmonton for a while. Which means we're all famous now, too! ☺



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BY SHANNON PHILLIPS

Goodbye to a good dude

There's a reason why some clichés are used so often: they're true. Life is fragile and short; live in the moment; love your neighbour, and so on.

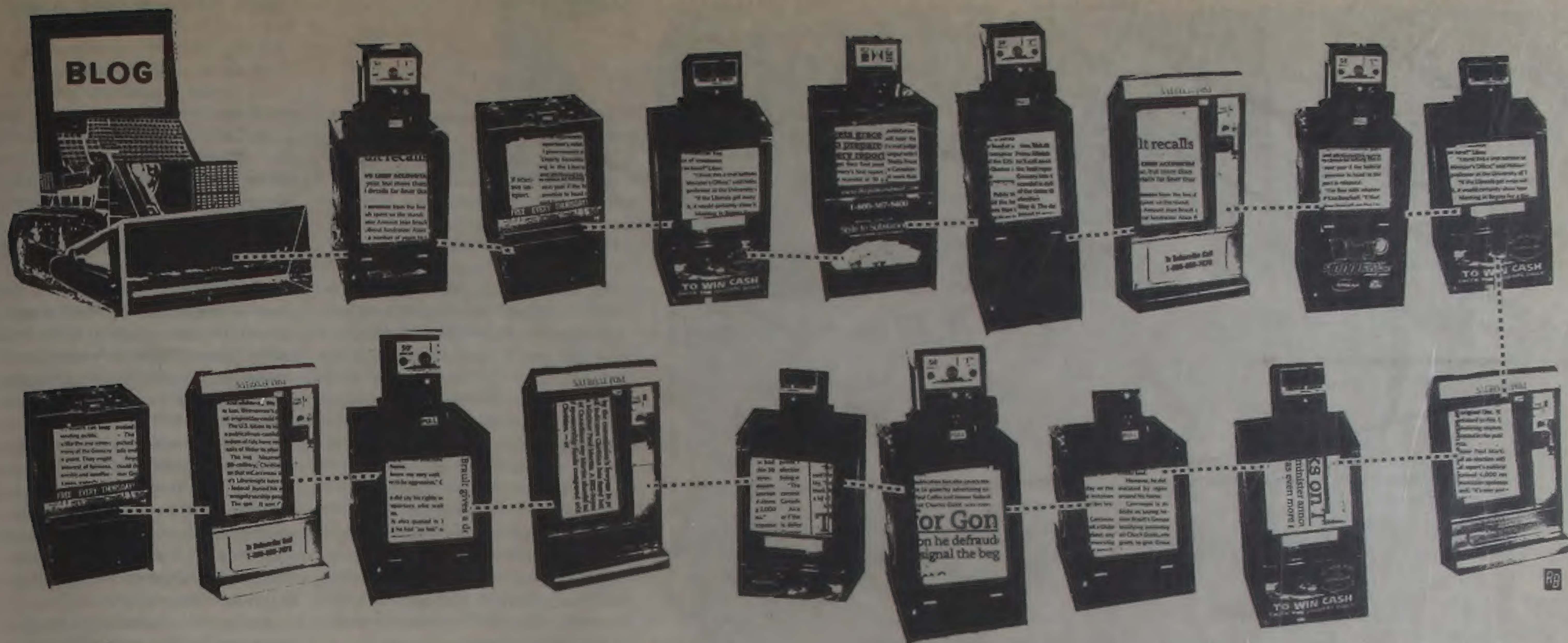
This Christmas was spent like any other in my parents' house—we ate like kings and queens, we had a few drinks, we played Trivial Pursuit and Pictionary, taunting our opponents and laughing uproariously. This year, we kept it small like we usually do—immediate family plus Chris and Babs, my sister's best friends, who are often more faithful kids than I or my sister. My dad never had a son, and Chris never met his dad. They worked together on some tradesman-y stuff. They would go out to the garage and tinker or just—in their words—BS. That's tradesman-talk for becoming friends, and busy men who work hard to pay the bills have few chances to do that.

Over the past five years, Phillips Thanksgivings and Christmases and random Sunday dinners were often blessed with Chris' quick wit, laid-back attitude, and easy conversation. Chris was the kind of fellow who knew the good music, the good snowboarding spots, and worked his butt off so that he could enjoy life. He was kind and understanding. He was very bright, and soft around his tradesman edges.

On Boxing Day, Chris and Babs were in a car accident on their way to Fernie. I write this on December 27; we still don't know what happened. All we know is Chris was killed, Babs is in the hospital, and driving is still, by far, the most dangerous thing we do each day.

We also know that Chris' last evening was spent eating and laughing in those too-few moments when we allow ourselves to forget about our silly preoccupations and problems and reflect, for just a second while making a hole in your mashed potatoes for the onslaught of gravy, about what it means to be alive. It means this: hug your friends, and give them your time and your energy, never mind the gifts. It also means this: you will be sad when lives around you end, and you cannot know when that will be. That sadness you'll feel is because that particular member of your human family filled your life with something you were missing. Our entire human family has the capacity to do this.

Be kind, because everyone is fighting a hard battle. And when that battle is over, and you are gone, you probably want to be remembered like this: Chris McKenzie died on Boxing Day, 2005. He was the quintessential good dude. ☹



The information reformation

How blogging is making the newsroom a more open community

BY ANGUS LEECH

Last October, prominent U.S. business and tech writer Nicholas Carr sparked a controversial debate when he posted his essay "The Amoral of Web 2.0" on his blog. The journalist pointed out that, like many innovations before it, the latest wave of web business models and trends (assembled under the dubious marketing buzz-tag "Web 2.0") is somewhat over-evangelized by new-day pundits hailing its promise to promote a more democratic culture via things like open-source software and collectively authored sites like Wikipedia. Maybe we should ditch the breathless rhetoric for a moment, Carr says, and take a good, long look at whether these open-community modes of cultural production are actually good for us.

For example, Wikipedia's content may be democratic (anyone can add or edit entries), but it's simply not very good—in fact, because it doesn't have to meet any kind of editorial standard, it's often inaccurate and untrustworthy. Nevertheless, Carr argues, it's free, popular and significantly threatening the survival of *Encyclopedia Britannica*. And then there are the mainstream newspapers, where both ad revenues and readership have been nosediving thanks to competition from free classified sites like Craigslist and amateur news providers like bloggers. But, he adds, the competition has a few weaknesses: its tendency to be superficial, its tendency towards an almost pathological repetition of information and it favours opinion over reporting. Still, if the Internet is changing the economics of creativity and cultural production and bloggers are out-com-

peting old guard newsrooms online, then perhaps we ought to be worried. Do we really want to see our venerable news institutions and their good, old fashioned backroom editorial rigour swept wholly away by an undisciplined mob with a new kind of pencil? Carr says he'll take the pros over the amateurs any day, and fears that an emerging "cult of amateurism" may actually restrict rather than expand our choices.

CARR'S PROVOCATION birthed a blizzard of blogspoke, with some applauding his contrarian truth-telling and others dismissing his argument as alarmist claptrap. In a November 30 article for Malsoneuve.org, Mark Moir did a great job of summing up the ensuing quality control versus collective authorship debate surrounding Wikipedia and the definitive ambiguities of Web 2.0. In the end, Moir concluded (like many bloggers before him) that the flaw in Carr's argument was that it was framed as an either/or issue when, in fact, both amateurs and professionals exist on the web, and the more interesting issue may be what kind of new symbiotic balance will evolve between the two.

Worth noting is that the question of how mainstream news media would be affected by the rising culture of open-source amateurism got far less attention in the press than in the blogosphere. This is especially curious considering the recent growth of amateur or "citizen journalism" in blog form (thanks in part to the medium's accessibility), and the increasing number of pro journalists turning to "j-blogging" as an outlet for reportage. How, we might ask, are blogging and collective

authorship notions shifting the foundations of the Fourth Estate? How are the lines between media producers and consumers blurring? Will we see blogging push the evolution of a new kind of news media?

What better place to ask such questions than at Blogs 'n' Dogs, a whimsically labelled workshop co-organized by the Banff New Media Institute (BNMI) and Vancouver-based web design firm Raincity Studios, which ran over the first weekend in December at the Banff Centre. For faculty member Susannah Gardner and participant Travis F. Smith, a quick chat about citizen j-blogging and its influences upon mainstream media offered a welcome diversion. Smith and Gardner are a husband and wife

TECHNOLOGY

team; she's the Creative Director for Vancouver-based web design company Hop Studios, while he's the owner. Both are trained journalists, founding alumni of the *LA Times* web site and former editors at the *Online Journalism Review*, not to mention dyed-in-the-wool bloggers.

"Blogging is the biggest single influence on newspapers today," Smith says. "Journalism and politicians and all sorts of pre-existing societal structures are being forced to change in response, and now is the moment when the discussion turns from theory to practice. Citizen journalism operations are starting up and being successful, so suddenly the topic gains a bit of urgency, like the discussion pre- and post- the start up of the first nuclear reactor."

Now, "citizen journalism" refers to a greater general involvement in

newsmaking by members of the public—a blog-powered mode of participation that goes far beyond simple self-publishing. Although certain people have been using blogs to become amateur journalists in the proper methodological sense of the word, that's really only a small part of the growing tendency of web users to participate and engage in acts of news creation. There are many alternate variations, from bloggers fact-checking news reports in a peer review capacity (as with Dan Rather, who resigned from *60 Minutes* following allegations that a report about President Bush's National Guard record was based on forged documents) to others who track particular beats and follow up with tips that plug journalists into an expanded network of newsgathering intelligence. Overall, as U.S. journalist Dan Gilmour phrases it in his recent book, *We, the Media*, this grassroots media explosion sees members of the "former audience" adopting easy-access social networking technologies to infiltrate the news process and transform it "from a lecture to a conversation."

A "CONVERSATION" sounds less like Carr's amateur-versus-professional polarity and more like a collaborative relationship evolving between the two. And Gardner, for one, believes the push from bloggers is mainly about remaking the newsroom a more open and inclusive community. "You have all these enthusiasts out there looking at things in a different way, who can help you decide your story's angle," she says, and Smith agrees, adding, "Here's this new form of media that can enhance and complement and strengthen what we do... I don't think we should be derid-

ing 'amateur' journalists; I think they should be celebrated."

Smith also says it will mean allowing readers to comment publicly on news stories, correct mistakes, submit contributions, even consult with journalists to edit and shape articles and decide what's most important to cover. In general, amateurs will not be competing against professionals so much as helping them to do their jobs better. "I think that the role of the journalist, amateur or not, is still going to be the same," he explains, "which is to make ties to a community, to try to understand an issue in a holistic way, and then to tell that story to the best of their ability, as synthesizers who speak to and for an audience... And I think what citizen journalists should be doing is to provide the background and depth of knowledge that a journalist writing a story on deadline can't."

"Yeah, and covering the 'little' news," Gardner adds. "There's a huge gap between what's in 'The News' and what's actually newsworthy. I think there is a big role there for the amateur to fill, in providing the kind of stuff that is never going to find its way into the *Vancouver Sun*."

"The quality issue does fascinate me," she continues, "I have very high standards of information consumption—I like proper grammar and a logical progression of ideas. Of course, not everyone has the same standards. But I think there will always be people like me who will demand a higher end product."

Smith agrees that we are unlikely, as a culture, to accept inferior information products simply because they are free. "Would you say that bad

SEE PAGE 9

BOB'S QUICK FRENCH GUIDE TO FRENCH

OKAY, SO FIRST YOU'VE GOT THE VERB "TO BE":

You listen!

TO BE = ÊTRE

SO WHERE WE'D SAY...

...THE FRENCH WOULD HAVE IT...

I am
You are
He is
We are
You are
They are

Je suis
Tu es
Il est
Nous sommes
Vous êtes
Ils sont

TO HAVE = AVOIR

THEN THERE'S "TO HAVE"...

I have
You have
He has
We have
You have
They have

Je ai
Tu as
Il a
Nous avons
Vous avez
Ils ont

OR IS THAT AVENT?

ANYWAY, THEN THERE'S "BE ABLE TO"...

CAN = POUVOIR

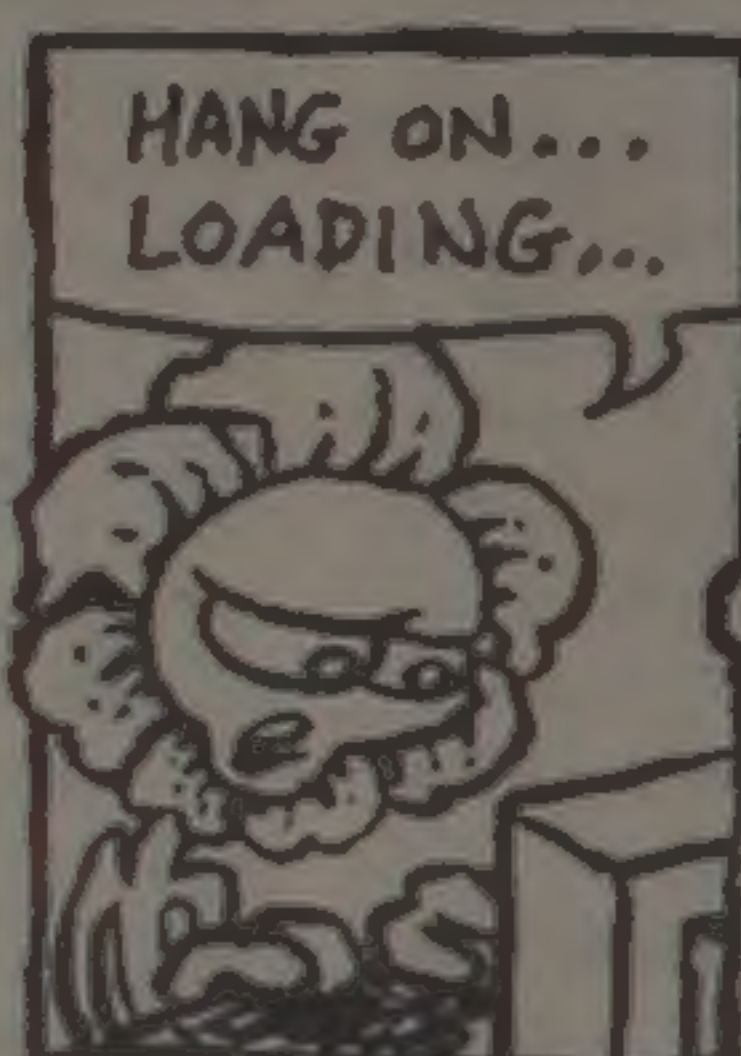
I can
You can
He can
We can
You can
They can

Je peut
Tu peux
Il peut...s?
Nous pouvons
Vous pouvez
Ils... uh... peuvent?

THEN THERE'S THE PASSÉ COMPOSÉ, WHICH IS LIKE "I HAVE LAUGHED", SO "LAUGHED", THAT'S...

UH...

WHAT'S "LAUGH" AGAIN?



dispatch

12/25/05, Baby's first Christmas

How did we do it, boys? How did we make it through infancy with only the material culture of the '70s to sustain us? Surround your child with the delights of my childhood—a high chair with unpadded chrome trim, a playpen with exposed hinges, a car seat without jet-fighter restraints, swings without plastic chainguards—and these days you'd be up on child-abuse charges. But little Easton here sits like a prince amid splendours we could never have guessed at back when "multimedia" meant playing with a Tupperware shape-ball while *The Price Is Right* was on, a vault of riches increased today by two minivan-loads, courtesy of baby Jesus.

The little guy is indeed a magical creature, but no genie or sprite or ectoplasmic entity ever had such an embarrassment of choice where containment devices are concerned. There's the high-tech infant recliner with flashing baubles dangling from an overhead superstructure, "kick pads" that trigger lights and sound when baby flails his adorable feet, and a vibrating Magic Fingers massage function. The backup recliner, a more streamlined affair, offers only the vibration; flashing lights and tinny bleeps must be provided by some third-party toy. There's a crib with a motorized mobile and a device that plays little microchipped lullabies and/or the sound of the seashore. Easton's intermodal transport needs are met by a carrying basket, a SUV stroller, and a car seat; the car seat has no electrical devices, but with a model name like "Alpha Omega Elite" (seriously; no shit) you don't need them. Most favoured of all, though, is the Jolly Jumper, which also sproings and bloings and plays zany clown-clown music (and flashes lights, of course) in time with his jolly

jumps. The cutest, watest widdle products of China's finest sweatshops; four months old and he's already burned through his weight in batteries.

I wonder how all this action's going to affect his sensory-processing capabilities, his boredom thresholds; basically, he's spending his infancy in a 24-hour disco, complete with exposed breasts. Can you be jaded at five months? I mean, I play videogames for a living and I could barely handle it. Like, yesterday? There I am, trying to read *Journey to the End of the Night* amid the County Home Accents, and my mother and sister-in-law are watching baby videos while Easton's busy in his jumper. The moment of reality-warping singularity came when the tape got to a scene of... Easton busy in his jumper. So now, between tape and reality, there's two cooing and gushing mamas, two cooing and gushing nanas, two happy babbling babies, and two goddamn sproing, bloinging, whistling, beeping Jolly Jumpers. Shit! I had to flee downstairs and read under the cold gaze of the widescreen television.

Last night I dreamed I had a child, a daughter. Her name was Gilly, she was seven years old, and I loved her completely. I actually kind of cried when I woke up and realized she, like the triple-decker bus we were riding in, was a figment. I'm getting old, and the concept of raising children is becoming less abstract and more depressing with every paycheck. But the baby magazines in my brother's bathroom tell the truth: there is no way, no way in hell, I will ever be in a position to bring up a baby in the manner middle-class consumer culture expects. The list of things a child "needs" and "deserves" is just too hopelessly long. Even the rosier income predictions leave little Gilly with a second-hand crib and no back-seat DVD player—simply unacceptable.

Ah, well; if "vaguely disreputable uncle" is the best I'm going to manage, I might as well throw myself into the role. Thirteen years from now, me and Easton will crack open a couple of genetically-modified space beers out on the hover-porch, and I'll activate my surveillance-camera jammer and whisper to him about the Good Old Days.... —DARREN ZENKO

VUEWEEKLY

EDUCATION 2006 NEXT WEEK

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paintings destroy good art? I really do think it's alarmist to say that Wikipedia's going to come along and therefore humanity is going to stop valuing an accurate holistic representation of human knowledge."

ONE FACTOR that should help combat mediocrity in amateur reporting is the development of new hybrid approaches in which professional editors help to moderate open newsmaking communities and sort the wheat from the chaff. Every now and then, Wikipedia is rumoured to be hiring editors to review the site for accuracy and fraud, and though it hasn't happened yet, Gardner and Smith both feel that the same thing is soon likely to happen to amateur j-blogging.

In fact, it's already beginning to happen, as demonstrated by two new Canadian initiatives experimenting with hybrid editorial strategies. At the soon to be launched Orato.com, members will be invited to pitch angles on stories the editors want to see covered. The site will pay selected contributors, and ensure that everything meets basic editorial standards (similar sites that rely entirely on unpaid volunteer content, like the U.S. soccer fan journal MatchNight.com, provide their reporters with actual training). Then there's NowPublic.com, a self-declared "open source news site" where anybody can sign up, publish news that's important to them and, of course, discuss, dispute and review. Members can also take part in editorial decision making by voting collectively on how the site's budget should be spent, and which news assignments should take priority.

As open-content business models mature, it's logical to suppose that these editorial experiments in compromise will mature as well. Carr reminds us that some new models, like Craigslist, are already giving the old guard a run for their money. So if citizen journalism hybrids can police quality, expand newsgathering intelligence, cover the "little" beats and generally deliver the sense of participation and democratic engagement that people seem to be looking for, is this kind of competition really a bad thing?

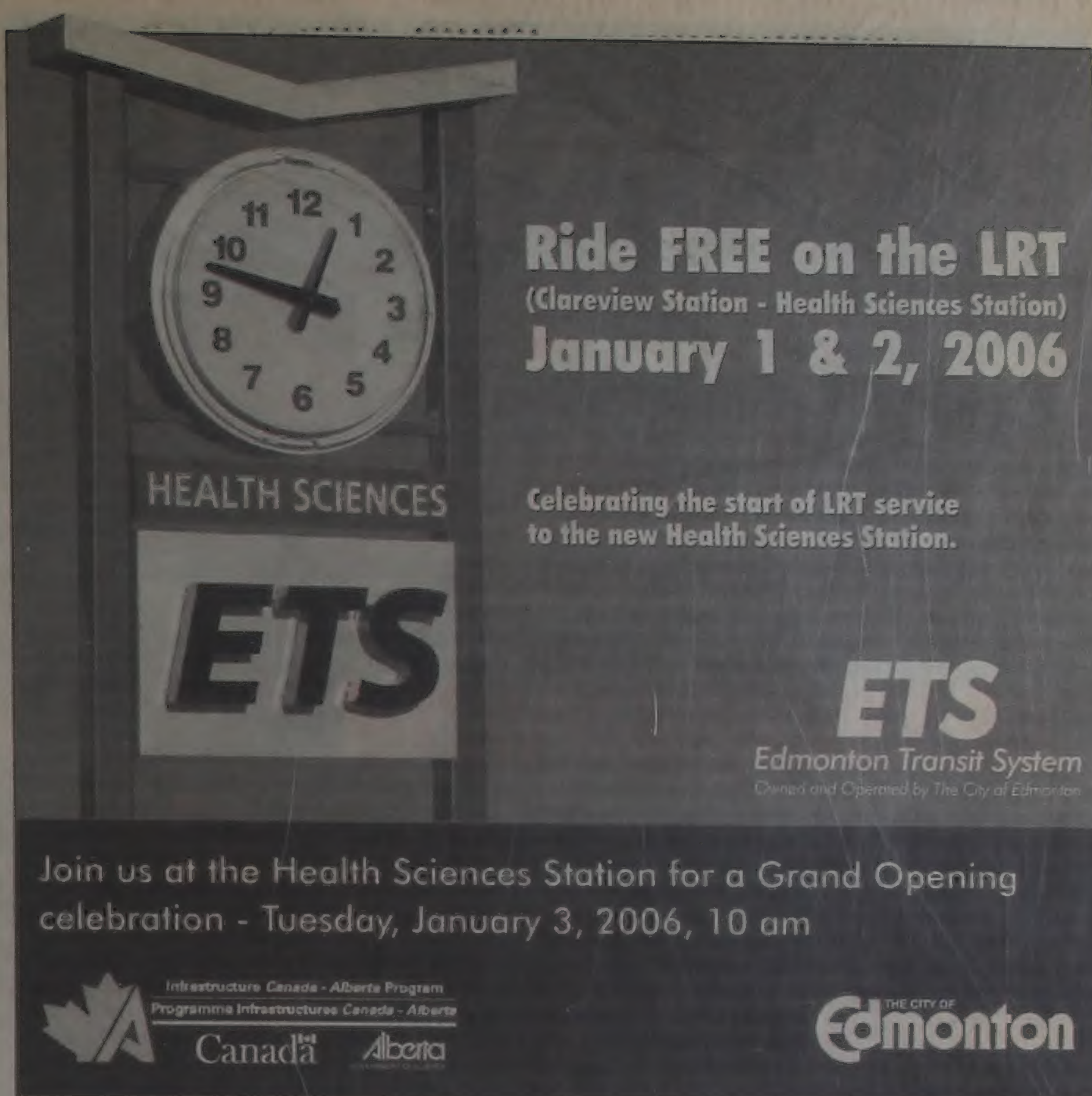
Smith doesn't think so. "Why should these organizations be guaranteed a place in the firmament for the next million years?" he asks. "Economics change and companies go out of business—that's just the way it is. Traditional media, newspapers and television, they've all refused to evolve. Newspaper web sites are generally atrocious. So it's their lack of mutation that's punishing them."

OF COURSE, there are exceptions. Steve Outing of Poynter Online recently published a guide for progressive outlets called "The 11 Layers of Citizen Journalism," and several flagship newsrooms are following his kind of advice. For example, the *New York Times* launched its first official j-blog on December 7, and CBS News launched a "transparency blog" last September, aimed at opening their newsgathering process to

public scrutiny and dialogue. Meanwhile, closer to home, CanWest's daily pan-Canadian magazine *Dose* hosts user blogs on its web site and regularly experiments with audience-generated content.

All in all, whether it's citizen journalism sites or mainstream outlets who are doing the adapting, the trend actually seems to be favouring more choice rather than less in terms of user options, beats covered and diversity of voices. As Smith explains, those pro journalists who have recently jumped ship and joined the j-blogging vanguard (like the west-coast indie reporters at TheTye.com) have typically been frustrated with the narrow limits imposed by their employers. "A lot of journalists in today's newsrooms are unhappy about the state of things," he says. "The media concentration is ridiculous, and the reporters' ability to express themselves just isn't there. When you have this kind of consolidation, you don't end up with the diversity of voices that you need for really spirited public debate and choice."

It's likely that so many people are looking to participate in today's news media because their voices aren't heard there already, and now they have the technology to fill the gap. But where Nicholas Carr frames this insurgence as an either/or contest that threatens to exterminate traditional news media, an hour spent chatting with Susannah Gardner and Travis Smith suggests that what we're actually looking at are the signposts of its reformation. ☐



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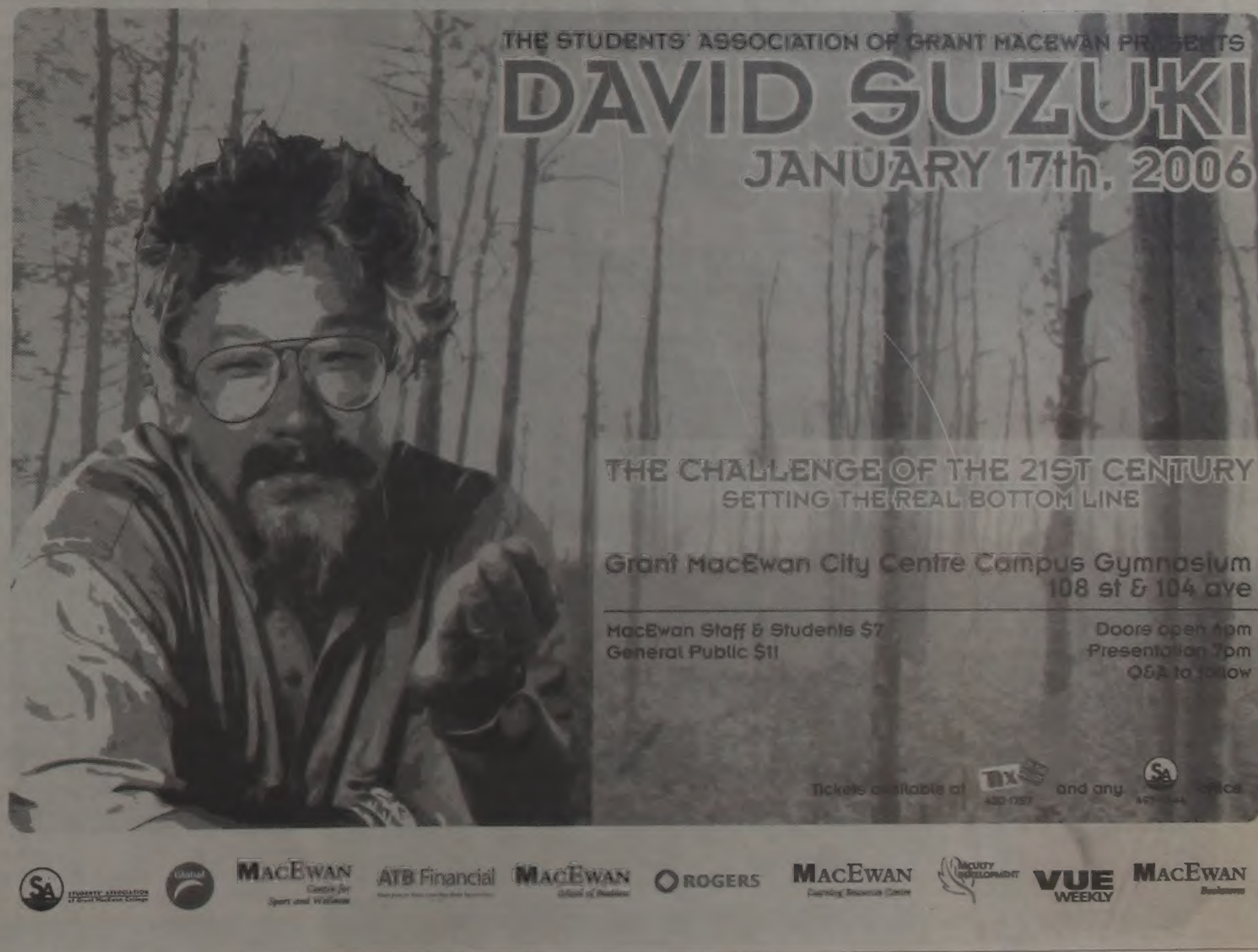
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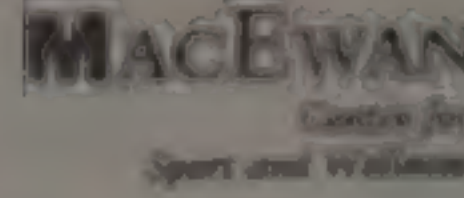
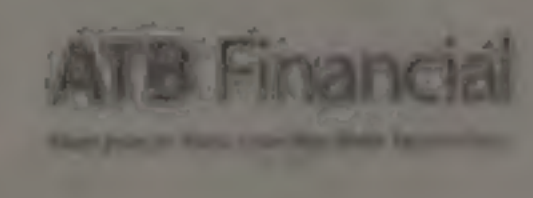


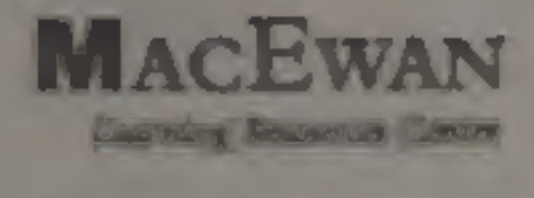
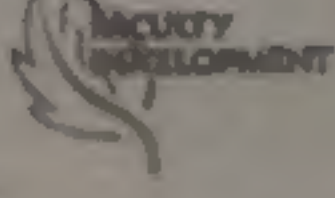

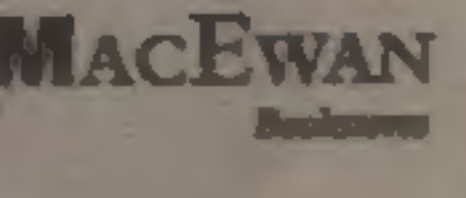
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By CHRISTOPHER WIEBE

The great North

During this holiday time full of family and friends, it seems particularly appropriate to look at two books that look at home, stories, and belonging. Red Deer writer Birk Sproxtion's book *Phantom Lake: North of 54* (University of Alberta) offers a layered exploration of Flin Flon, Manitoba that brilliantly reveals how stories, personal and public, form the bedrock of a place. Thomas King, formerly of Lethbridge and now living in Guelph, has gathered his short fiction from roughly the past decade in a new collection, *A Short History of Indians in Canada* (HarperCollins). While bristling with King's ironic humour, these stories are dead serious. Many of them challenge the conventional notion that aboriginal stories are rooted in remote traditional lands, and propose instead that they can transcend place and serve as powerful tools to critique white society.

Flin Flon, as Sproxtion explains, came into being because of the promise of treasures held in the Canadian Shield—copper, zinc, silver, and gold, as it turned out. These mineral deposits were discovered just before WWI and set off a prospecting frenzy, but it took massive investment in railway and hydroelectric before production began in 1930. When Sproxtion grew up in Flin Flon in the 1950s, the town was still a kind of northern island; the region's labyrinthine topography of lakes and rock marked by the trending of retreating glaciers seeped into Sproxtion's bones, and he has returned most years to a family cabin on Phantom Lake.

Sproxtion describes in fascinating detail such things as the tough work he performed at the mine and in the bush drilling geological samples. But *Phantom Lake* is in no way a straight memoir; rather, the text is regularly interspersed with fictional scenes from Sproxtion's life. The text's structure is not unlike the lake itself: "Someone said the lake was named for its deceptive bays. You think you're going one place and then you find you've gone somewhere else." It is a magpie nest of stories about Flin Flon—a re-mythologizing of the "near North"—a moving contemplation of a place as experienced over time. We hear how the first Franklin expedition passed through the area in 1819, the geological explorations of Joseph Burr Tyrrell, and we meet an extraordinary prospector and astronomer by the name of Kate Rice who found wonder and romance in the north.

In fact, Flin Flon owes its name and perhaps existence to an obscure novel,

J.E. Preston-Muddock's *The Sunless City* (1905). As the story goes, prospectors in 1914 came across the novel in a blueberry patch on a portage. As Sproxtion writes, "Incredibly, the novel turned out to be about a character named Josiah Flintabbatey Flonatin, who plunges in a man-made fish down to the bottom of a bottomless lake where eventually he finds an underground city. In that city, the gold was so plentiful that it was literally a base metal." The next summer the prospectors found gold near a small lake and claimed it was where Flonatin emerged from the ground, so naming the discovery Flin Flon.

Despite this body of lore, the young Sproxtion didn't recognize Flin Flon as a storied place; instead, the Canadian West he read about or heard on the radio was W.O. Mitchell's prairie of gophers and grain elevators. As Sproxtion writes: "We knew we had stories—we heard them at home and on the streets and in the rinks—but we lacked knowledge of the literary antecedents in which to set them. We were off the map, out of range, terra incognito—or so it felt, and sometimes feels." With *Phantom Lake*, Sproxtion maps these wayward stories but with his elastic structure, signals his refusal to contain them, to pin Flin Flon's abundant mythologies down.

The stories in Thomas King's book *A Short History of Indians in*

Canada offer many sides against which to sharpen your critical knife. In the first story, native people are flying into Toronto office towers and falling dead to the sidewalk. "Tidings of Comfort and Joy" follows Hudson Gold through the difficulties of managing a collection of Indians: "Those two aren't quite as dark as the others." Hudson felt bad about raising the matter. "And only three of them have long hair." "Honey, be reasonable," said Eleanor, "it's almost impossible to find a matched set of full bloods, anymore." The absurdity of this strategy of "pointed indirectness" (to coin a term) shows the greater absurdity of the anthropological gaze and Indian reservation policy, and gracefully avoids the downfall of earnest, "issue-oriented" fiction.

The essence of comedy is defamiliarization, often through a basic reversal or substitution. The resulting tension is both humorous and reveals the arbitrariness and even the stupidity of "the way of the world." In one of King's stories, a white baby mistakenly arrives by mail order and is offered up as a bingo prize, while in others a naked woman falls from the mythic past of Turtle Island into a motel swimming pool, or the Indian Act of 1875 is likened to the assimilationist "Borg" of *Star Trek* fame. King once said that it's hard to make your point if you are kicking down peoples' front door, but if you knock at the back door and make them laugh, they'll welcome you inside. King's novels and writing for the CBC radio show "Dead Dog Café" exemplify this. *A Short History* confirms King's extraordinary literary range in stories that are ironic and smart, but also surprisingly moving. ▀



hired to play the little monster, a type so emblematic that directors would finally resign themselves to simply asking Lorre to "Just be Peter Lorre." By his last years, Youngkin imagines, filmmaking for Lorre "had become a revolving door, with his double, the dark insider, being ushered in, while he was escorted out."

The Lost One's other refrain also begins with the letter M. As a penniless bohemian from Hungary who was taking Berlin's (especially Brecht's) theatre by storm, Lorre developed pulmonary tuberculosis and an addiction to morphine that he would never quite shake. Youngkin convincingly surmises that the addiction was no doubt exacerbated by Lorre's struggles with type-casting, with the dissatisfaction he felt at being unable to branch out or realize some of his dream roles. Parts

such as Kaspar Hauser or the title character in Jaroslav Hasek's *The Good Soldier Svejk* were projects Lorre



always spoke about (Chaplin even offered to direct *Svejk*) but failed to ever realize. His ability to function

veiled an even more desperate dependency, but it began visibly taking its toll by the time Lorre was in his mid-40s, wearing away at his health until he died of a brain haemorrhage at 59.

Yet for all the sadness that permeated Lorre's life, Youngkin recognizes the considerable joy the humble, good-humoured actor took in being able to work at all, especially if he could work with good friends (and formidable drinking buddies) like John Huston or Humphrey Bogart. Youngkin relays numerous brilliant anecdotes about Lorre's productive time at Warner Bros., but my favourite has Lorre getting a call from Bogart at 6 a.m., asking to be picked up at some private residence in Hollywood Hills. Bogart had shut down every bar and wandered through the night until he smelled coffee emanating from a house. Unshaven and dirty, he pressed his face to the kitchen window and asked "Can I have some coffee?" The woman inside shrieked but soon recognized Bogart, and by the time

Lorre arrived, Bogart was drinking coffee with brandy and enjoying a story-editing session with four kids.

Lorre spoke sparingly about his politics, but Youngkin also gives us an intriguing portrait of Lorre's inevitable entanglements and fundamentally Samaritan heart. There's a wonderful story about Lorre who, before fleeing Nazi Germany, was

us to another time, a time of World Wars and sweeping ideologies, of pioneering in the film industry and a "stable" mentality guiding the studios. But it's uncanny how clearly Lorre's persona reaches from that time, sails right across the years, a real standout character back when Hollywood was full of characters. Lorre's persona was so complex.

Lorre's performance [in Fritz Lang's *M*], at once terrifying and sympathetic, was so convincing he got fan mail from psychopaths.

helping a friend burn incriminating documents on a beach along the Baltic. The two men were spotted by police but explain that they're there to shoot a new Peter Lorre movie called *The Fire Victim of the Baltic Sea*. The star-struck officer winds up rolling up his sleeves and helping them feed the fire.

Youngkin's biography transports

unusual and engaging that it transcends style. And with *The Lost One*, that person can now be further fleshed out by a glimpse of the real person behind it. **C**

**THE LOST ONE:
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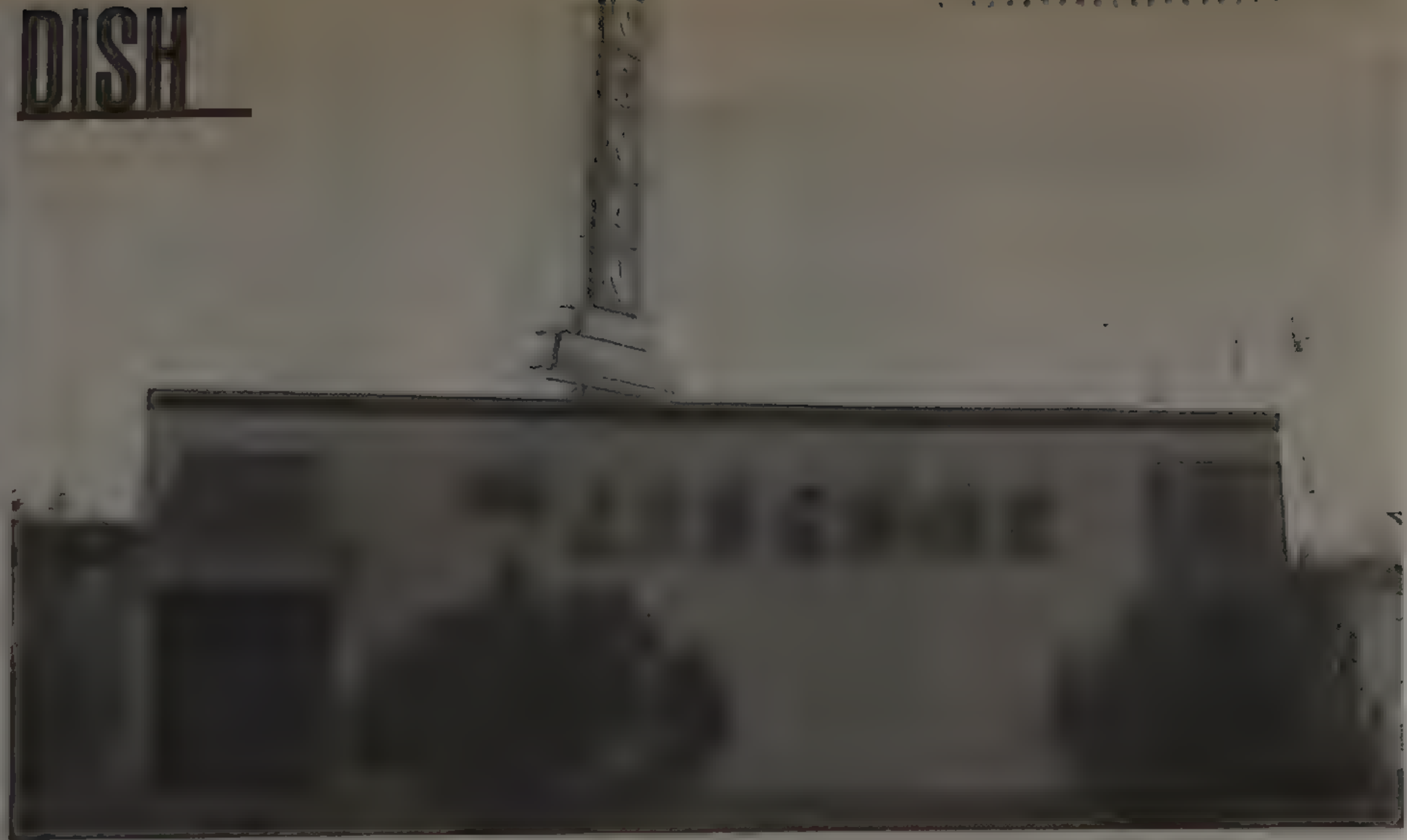
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Auld Ling Syne

Should auld acquaintance be forgot? Not the Lingnan Chinese Restaurant, anyhow

By QUENTIN RANSON

I t was dark out and I took a wrong turn in the business parks north of Oliver Square a little while ago. I scanned my surroundings for the quickest way out and my eye caught a familiar sight; the conspicuous neon sign of the **Lingnan Chinese Restaurant** brought back a flood of memories. Surprised it was still in business, I felt compelled to check it out.

I haven't eaten at the Lingnan since I was 10 years old, and at the time it was the only place that warranted packing the whole family into the station wagon to cart us out of St. Albert's suburban sanctum and into Edmonton. What kind of memory did I have of the place? Why the hell did we drive so far into "town" for Chinese food? Surely, St. Albert had a Chinese restaurant of its own. When I thought back, only one word came to mind: fancy. I had visions of crisp, white cloth napkins, giant fire-engine-red Chinese lanterns hanging from the ceiling and lush seaweed in enormous goldfish tanks. And then I recalled wave after wave of plates

stacked high with exotic, sizzling, sticky-sweet food.

As I walked through the front door, I realized that very little had changed. I entered the foyer to be overwhelmed by the vivid red, gold and black décor. Obvious care maintained its original character: the large dining room was divided in two by ornately carved wooden screens and Chinese lanterns hung from the lavishly-decorated ceiling, and the atmosphere maintained a certain Sean

harkened back to an era when going out for dinner was more special than it is now. The Lingnan offered "aristocratic" chicken, "gourmet" rice dishes or "de-luxe" combos. The crispy fried beef wontons (\$7.75) that started our meal came stacked in a huge mound. Every bite of these rice papers stuffed with perfectly spiced beef made a satisfying crackle as we popped them into our mouths. They were delicious, but we barely ate half the plate before deciding to leave room for the main courses.

Following the starters, our extremely helpful waiter directed us to a couple of his personal favourites for the main course. Carefully considering his recommendations, we narrowed it down to three choices. The Szechuan Beef (\$12.50) consisted of strips of beef covered in a sugary glaze, infused with a subtle smoky flavour. The dish resembled typical ginger beef, but prepared with more love and attention than the versions served at many faster food Chinese restaurants. The Gee Gee Chicken (\$12.50), meanwhile, sounded a lot more interesting on the menu than it actually was. Steamed chicken and vegetables were served in a hot ceramic pot, and the flavours didn't command our attention like the beef. Our favorite main course was the Lo Han Jai (\$9.75), a blend of tofu and vegetables that was apparently created for Chinese Buddhist monks.

SEE PAGE 15



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Connery-era James Bond chic. But to simply write it off as kitsch would undermine its sincerity. Unlike many ethnic restaurants replete with touristy knick-knacks hastily strewn across the walls, this place was obviously intended to be one seriously classy joint.

Opening up the menu, my wife and I were struck by the long cocktail list. The names conjured images of the romantic lounge culture that your parents or even grandparents might have aspired to. For a meagre \$3.75, I could choose from a Velvet Hammer, a Scarlet O'Hara or even a Singapore Sling. My wife chose a Pink Lady; she actually giggled with excitement when it arrived.

THE EXTENSIVE MENU included the usual Chinese fare in addition to numerous house specialties. Even the words used to describe the food



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Carpe Culina

Culina's Chef Brad Lazarenko brings a taste of metropolitan cuisine to Edmonton

BY CHRISTOPHER THRALL

Culina is the restaurant that Chef Brad Lazarenko wanted to see in Edmonton. "The neighbourhood bistro isn't very common here," he states. "Culina evolved from ideas I discovered in my travels through cities like Vancouver and Montreal." By keeping it small, Culina has been much easier to manage and has stayed much more intimate. By keeping it inexpensive, Culina's popularity has grown by leaps and bounds.

The 36-year-old Lazarenko is a self-taught success, having worked his way up from pastries and desserts to

become head chef at Whyte favourite Packrat Louie's for six years, before leaving to make his own mark on Edmonton's varied culinary scene. Lazarenko went on to spend nearly two years consulting for the Savoy and the Sugarbowl while helping with his sister's catering business. When Bruno's, a tiny local pub in King Edward, came available in December of 2003, he jumped at the chance.

Four months later, Culina opened its doors. News spread like



wildfire: Lazarenko's neighbourhood bistro became *Vue Weekly's* best restaurant of 2004, *See* magazine's "best new restaurant of 2005" (?) and earned kudos in the *Edmonton Journal* and *enRoute*.

"I serve what I like to call ethnic comfort food," says Lazarenko. "I rely

on the bold flavours of recipes kept true to their origins. Then I add a little twist." He notes that his seductive combination of beef tenderloin in blue cheese and chocolate sauce is faithful to the spirit of French cuisine, and his other dishes receive the same kind of inspired treatment.

Lazarenko doesn't showboat, however. "I keep to the food that I would want to eat," he says. "Some chefs go out of their way to develop crazy combinations. For me, the neighbourhood bistro has to be accessible." Pressed to name his own favourite, he describes his pork tortillas. "We make the tortillas ourselves," Lazarenko says, "although I admit that the line-caught wild salmon is very popular."

The Culina wine list is an offbeat read of varietals from the Okanagan valley and around the world. The

SEE PAGE 15

new years



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THE CAJUN HOUSE

7 St. Anne Street, St. Albert • 460-8772
 “I’m having the special,” my wife announced with desperate certainty after a quick glance at our dining options at St. Albert’s Cajun House. “There are way too many good things in there.” The menu featured inexpensive po’boys, gumbo and jambalayas; in short, every Creole dish I had ever sampled and enjoyed, which left me in a pickle. Delectable descriptions of blackened catfish, steak in feta cheese and pecan-encrusted chicken set my head to spinning. Well past the point of making a choice, I copped out with the first combination I saw: the Cajun House Combination Plate (\$10.50). The selection promised jambalaya, shrimp Creole, red beans and smoked sausage. I tried to convince my wife to start with frog’s legs (tastes like swamp chicken, I’ve been told), but we settled on coconut shrimp (\$7.95) instead. The coconut shrimp arrived relatively quickly; six piping-hot prawns basked in their thick breading, sweetened by crispy strands of coconut meat as we savoured the salty contrast of the dark soy dipping sauce. Our server returned a short while later with our main courses, and both of us dove in immediately. I nibbled around my jambalaya at first, teasing myself with the delicious red beans and popping a couple of plump, firm Creole-spiced shrimp into my mouth. The rich, mildly spicy combination was stunning, and nearly every bite included ham, sausage or chicken as well as the delicious mixture of spicy rice, peppers and tomatoes. The heat built gradually on my palate and I appreciated the glass of water beside me, but I never had to lunge for it. Meanwhile, my wife was mowing through her *petit*-sized special (\$11.95). A generous portion of pan-fried halibut lay under a yellow tomato sauce. Next to her steamed vegetables, the roasted potato was sliced into tender discs and sprinkled with herbs. My wife was ecstatic about her choice and the light, tender and juicy white meat was well worth the wait. The yellow tomato sauce tasted almost squash-like and balanced the halibut beautifully. Never one for fish, one taste of her entrée made me an instant convert. We left the restaurant weighed down with

my girl’s Mississippi Mud Pie (\$4.95) and my flourless, bittersweet chocolate cake (\$4.25). We managed to make it all the way to the car before she tore into the takeout containers. I was a little disappointed in the dense brownie floating in a whipped cream pool, but her chocolate mousse-chocolate cheesecake-chocolate crust dessert was a sensation. We were just over \$50 lighter and absolutely stuffed. I couldn’t believe that this popular little restaurant in plutocratic St. Albert wasn’t charging far more for its outstanding cuisine. All they needed for ambiance was an exuberant jazz ensemble and a voodoo priestess going table to table offering curses and aphrodisiacs. **Average Price: \$\$\$** (Reviewed 5/26/05)

GLENORA GRILL

12327-102 Ave • 482-3531
 The Glenora Grill’s menu is, in a word, creative. There are a lot of interesting flavour combinations, and a diverse mix of ingredients catering to clients who are culinarily conservative or gastronomically adventurous. There were plenty of options to choose from, though I settled fairly quickly on the Arabic Chicken (\$19), a braised chicken breast with raisins, pine nuts, eggplant and fresh tomatoes, with cumin-laced yogurt to top. My wife was in the mood for fish, opting for the Plank-Roasted Pacific Salmon (\$20), which came with crispy leeks and a cranberry aioli. To start things off, I felt like a soup, and seeing how our waiter heartily recommended the Tacoma Sweet Onion Soup (\$4.25 per cup), I thought I’d give it a try. My wife chose the Grilled Sliced Beef Salad (\$9.25), a beef-topped salad with fresh greens and a spicy tomato dressing. It took a while for our appetizers to show up, but when they did, they proved to be worth the wait. Garnished with a dollop of sour cream and some shredded parmesan, my sweet onion soup was, quite simply, the best I’ve ever had. My wife’s salad was huge, and had the better part of a steak sliced up and spread on top. The spicy tomato dressing was, true to its word, spicy, and the greens were fresh and tender. I expected a lot from the \$9 salad, and, judging by my wife’s reaction, it was worth the price. My Arabic chicken was seasoned with a deliciously complex group of flavours—the yogurt and cumin were typically eastern, while the almost salsa-like chunky tomato sauce that covered the chicken was full of unlikely bedfellows. (The raisins and pine nuts were, in particular, both strangely perfect additions to the dish.) My side of seasoned pota-

toes was good, though they paled in comparison to the outstanding chicken. Under all those crispy leeks, my wife’s salmon was smothered in a thick layer of cranberry aioli, which she loved. She enjoyed her salmon, but seemed to be even more enraptured by the huge grains of rice in her apparently delicious side dish. Even though my wife hadn’t been entirely able to finish off her main course, she was excited enough about dessert that we decided to take a look at what they had. My wife instantly gravitated towards the chocolate mousse (\$5.75), while I picked the passion fruit cheesecake (\$5.75), which was a violent shade of yellow/orange, and was brimming with passion fruit flavour. It was both intensely sweet and intensely sour, with a deliciously perfumed taste. After what had been an amazing appetizer and an outstanding entrée, the cheesecake was the exclamation point at the end of the evening. At nearly \$81 including tax, our meal wasn’t cheap, but the quality of the food, the level of service and the classy-but-comfortable ambiance made it an exceptional value. **Average Price: \$\$\$** (Reviewed 6/9/05)

THE MANOR CAFÉ

10109-125 St • 482-7577
 Although the Manor Café’s exterior presents the grandeur of a wealthy attorney-general’s home from 1929, the interior pulses with modern style. Every room was gorgeously appointed, with lush attention to detail. Far from full on this Friday evening, the Manor Café felt quiet and intimate. After long minutes of eliminating culinary temptations one by one, my decision came down to two dishes. Would I indulge in the Moroccan fruit couscous (\$17) or the Thermidor (\$22)? After a brief but intense inner battle, chicken stuffed with lobster and brie won a victory over curry coconut cream and pineapple chutney. Aromatics and aesthetics double-teamed me as I gazed at the wonder my server set down before me. Its skin perfectly crisped, the free-range chicken was lean and tender. Enveloped within the chicken, the lobster’s mild taste slid subtly through the spinach and garlic. Warm brie bound the many flavours together. The chicken sat atop a mound of creamy Dijon tarragon risotto, which provided a perfect texture to complement the crisp meat. Even the sautéed vegetables were sensational: savoury cloves are a welcome addition to red cabbage. Needless to say, I cleaned my plate and ventured back inside from my outdoor table for a coffee (\$1.95) and a look at the dessert tray. Half a sentence

into the description of the first mouth-watering treat, I knew that I could not simply browse, and pointed at the white chocolate, strawberry and mango crème brûlée (\$7). After a few tastes of a decent gourmet coffee, the dessert of my dreams was set before me. I quickly devoured the plump strawberry and crisp cookie that festooned the cup so that nothing would distract me from the moment my spoon cracked that sweet crust. I mixed the shards with the rich crème to blend both flavours with the white chocolate and juicy chunks of mango. I ate slowly and each taste melted into pure paradise on my tongue. **Average Price: \$\$\$** (Reviewed 6/9/05)

OLIVETO TRATTORIA

500 Riverbend Square • 435-6411
 Oliveto Trattoria’s interior is tasteful, if a tad on the basic side, and the lack of natural light made it feel a bit gloomy. Thankfully, the people dining in the space helped to liven it up, adding texture to the otherwise straightforward layout and décor. For starters, by wife picked a small Caesar Salad (\$4.50), while I thought I’d sample a bowl of their Minestrone with Pesto (\$5). For our main dishes, my wife selected the Spaghetti Puttanesca (\$10, spaghetti with anchovies, garlic, capers, white wine, olives and tomato sauce), while I opted for a tasty-sounding Penne Arrabbiata (\$13), a concoction of penne with Italian sausage and a spicy tomato sauce. Having quickly made our way through the small appetizers, we waited patiently for the rest of our meal to arrive. When it eventually did show up, the presentation was a bit anticlimactic. The Spaghetti Puttanesca looked pretty basic (though my wife assured me that it tasted very, very good) while my Penne Arrabbiata looked like it had just been plunked down with a scoop on the plain, cafeteria-style plate that it was served on. Thankfully, my initial doubts were misplaced, and it turned out to be delightfully flavourful, with an abundance of garlic and just the right quantity of sausage. Plus, the pasta was absolutely perfect. It had just enough bite while still being tender and supple. And who doesn’t love the perfect mix of tough and tender? Hey? Am I wrong, ladies? For dessert, my wife settled on a chocolate hazelnut gelato (\$5.95), while I selected the New York cheesecake (\$5.95) and a couple of lattes (\$3.40 each). The wedge of cheesecake was rich and moist, and the chocolate and raspberry sauces drizzled on top made it even better. My wife graciously let me sample a small

spoonful of her gelato, which was just as chocolatey as our server had promised. By the time we left, we could barely move. We were both impressed by the quality of our main courses, even though the presentation could have been a bit more creative. It’s nice to know that you can still find a decent non-fast-food-franchise meal out in the far reaches of suburbia. The houses may be generic, but at least some of the food is unique. **Average Price: \$\$\$** (Reviewed 5/26/05)

SHINE BISTRO

9828-101A Ave • 414-6347
 Tucked away between the southeast corner of the Citadel Theatre and Canada Place, Shine Bistro is in a perfect location to attract a fair bit of lunchtime traffic. The décor is certainly colourful (which is what I’d expect from a place called Shine), but not gaudy or overly wild—no doubt a nice change of pace from the drab beige cubicle walls that the people next door are stuck with for the better part of their days. After taking a good long look at the menu board behind the counter, I decided the Clubhouse Hot Sandwich (\$5.95), a triple-decker sandwich with toasted bread, turkey, ham, bacon, cheddar cheese, tomato, lettuce and mayo was what I was looking for. One bite into the clubhouse, and I knew that I’d made a good choice. The bread was well-toasted, the bacon and lettuce were both crisp and the shaved ham and turkey were still slightly chilled. The mayo was good (and plentiful), and the cheese completed the experience. It didn’t take me long to finish the sandwich, and, unfortunately, when the sandwich ran out, I was still sort of hungry. I wondered if it was too late to take them up on the combo deal (if you’ve ordered a sandwich, a mere \$1.50 extra gets you a salad or a bowl of soup), so I brought it up with the cheerful woman at the cash register. No problem, she said, so I ordered a bowl of their Black Bean Soup, which she said I’d like if I liked chili. I handed over a loonie and a couple of quarters, and wandered back over to my table, where my soup was quickly delivered. The presentation was certainly neat, with a fancy white criss-cross of sour cream on the top, contrasting with the deep, earthy brown of the soup. The spicing was indeed a sort of chili/Cajun mix (and fairly hot, too), while the puréed black beans gave it a very thick texture. I was quite impressed, and after finishing the rest of my cookie, nicely full. Sure beats a bagged lunch. **Average Price: \$\$\$** (Reviewed 6/2/05)

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grape expectations

By JAMES LYLE

THIS WEEK: Pisano RPF Tannat 2003 (\$23)

I was sitting in my cellar contemplating what I was going to review this week, and as I looked over the shelves dedicated to the usuals like Australia, France, Italy, the U.S., something else caught my eye. I was going to venture into a whole new experience—a wine from Uruguay. That's right: Uruguay. This small country has a blossoming wine industry run mainly by French and Italian immigrants. While the industry is small, the successes of their neighbours Argentina and Chile have emboldened wine producers and exporters.

Upon the first pour, this wine exudes a deep red, almost purple colour. While I found its nose lacking in fruit, the richness of texture and alcohol stood out. The taste was rich and fruity and lasted throughout the evolution of the sample. I found that its front-end sharpness rounded out at the back of the palate with a very relaxed aftertaste. I also found this wine stood up very well with the beef tenderloin with which I paired this wine. I will enjoy sampling this wine with another dish, perhaps game or pork, to see how it complements it. And if this wine is reflective of the quality of wines from Uruguay, I look forward to more and more. ♡



Lingnan Chinese Restaurant

Continued from page 12

Filled with baby corn, Chinese mushrooms and bamboo shoots, it was just one of the many interesting selections on the menu's impressive vegetarian page.

The food was enjoyable, but the interior of the Lingnan was an experience in and of itself that should

not be missed. Bring the kids and go at night. I found it reassuring that the owners had taken so much care to maintain what should be considered an Edmonton landmark. If you go, your palate will be satisfied and your senses will be dazzled. ♡

LINGNAN CHINESE RESTAURANT

10582-104 St • 426-3975

Brad Lazarenko

Continued from page 13

prices range from a reasonable \$31 a bottle to a not unreasonable \$139 for the 2000 Chateau LaGrange St. Julien Bordeaux. The list remains the passion of Lazarenko's business partner, former Whyte Avenue Second Cup owner Paul LaGrange. Wines are selected for their unique flavours and their ability to combine with Lazarenko's signature style.

THE COMBINATION of passion and accessibility is a formula that has worked wonders: not only has Culina become one of Edmonton's can't-miss bistros, but Lazarenko has already parlayed his success into expansion. The popularity of Culina's wine list inspired Passa Tempo, the 10-seat wine bar next door where guests are invited to "pass the time."

"There's a different atmosphere to Passa Tempo," says Lazarenko. "It's eclectic and bohemian, more a place for wine and cocktails with some unusual snacks. It serves as a place to wait for a table at Culina or a place to go after the meal." Since Culina's popularity has outgrown its 15 tables, Passa Tempo makes sense.

Carla Alexander will carry Lazarenko's next business venture. This talented chef has a gift for "soul soups" and her creations have been sold as take-outs from Culina for months. Lazarenko, along with Halo/Red Star owner Sal DiMaio, partnered with Alexander to open her own soup counter downtown. Soul Soups will be available starting in mid-January.

In the meantime, Culina will be

closed. "We're closing January 1st for some much-needed kitchen renovations—believe it or not, we only have four burners in our tiny kitchen," Lazarenko laughs. "We're expanding the cooking area while we take the staff on a five-day ski trip to Fernie." When Culina opens its doors again in the 19th, the chefs may be slightly less stressed and better able to produce the mouthwatering dishes their devoted clientele craves.

IF THEIR CUSTOMERS are looking for a brand new menu to ring in the New Year before he closes, forget it. "I don't like pushing something different on New Year's," Lazarenko confides. "It can end up just being a cash grab. I don't really do anything different on the holidays: I rely on people coming because they want to come." His menu is a brief but varied selection of exquisitely prepared dishes, and his prices keep customers coming back for more.

Even with two new enterprises, no grass grows under Lazarenko's ladle; he can't say much more, but a restaurant similar to Culina will apparently be opening up in partnership with a southern B.C. winery soon. The expansion will mean even more opportunities for his phenomenal staff to explore their own passions.

"I have to keep things exciting for the staff," Lazarenko says of his new endeavours, "and I find that if I'm excited, they're excited." When talented people are passionate about what they do, all sorts of new possibilities unfold. And self-made chef Brad Lazarenko will continue to make his indelible mark across the vibrant palette of Edmonton's culinary scene. ♡

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It takes a village

Panorama Mountain Village impresses with both breathtaking natural beauty and abundant creature comforts

By ADAM SMITH



There was a crisp, cold wind gusting from the northwest as we loaded the van, but the sky was clear and the Rockies were playfully visible from my parents' Calgary home. Having travelled from Edmonton the day before, my partner and I had already sliced a thick chunk from the prairie leg of our commute. I'm on the road with a girl who has never stood on a snowboard, and seems much more interested in some of the creature comforts than the cold, snowy challenge of the mountains. Nonetheless, we hit the road en route to Panorama, 282 kilometres from Calgary and about twice that distance from the capital.

From Cowtown, Panorama is approximately four hours down on the tarmac, on a path through Banff, and then south on the weaving, beautiful Highway 93, through the twisting curves and passes of the young, lustful and unbridled Rockies, through caves and past hot springs, over the continental divide, and on into beautiful British Columbia. The brittle shell of my old Volkswagen van was useless to protect us from nature's cool breath as we pushed the shuddering vehicle to previously unmatched heights. Dry snow scattered quickly over the lonely, unforgiving highway.

As our long drive came to its end, we passed through Invermere, a city of 9,000 that's about 10 minutes

from the hill, and then ascended to the Panorama Village, where one mega check-in controls all hospitality on the mountain. There was definitely an eerie feel to the softly lit village; it contributed to a strange uniformity that spread through all buildings and infrastructure in the area. We checked into the Taynton Lodge, a luxurious abode with a king-size bed, a couch, and a patio from which I could literally ride right down to the mountain's lifts.

PANORAMA HAS a reputation as a "side dish" of a mountain. It's more known for its family-oriented, resort atmosphere, and this reputation is

well deserved: there are families and children running amok, and hordes of really fast, really colourful ski racers. The racers that inhabit the lodge throughout the day look like some displaced exiles from some future republic, and now they're setting up refugee-like neon shanties in the lodge, groups of ski racers with aerodynamic gear and aerodynamic colours eating aerodynamic lunches all day, in the lodge, everywhere.

Dynamics and the future aside, Panorama was immensely impressive. Somewhere along the line I had developed some negative preconceptions about Panorama, all of which were completely unfounded. For some reason, I had categorized it as a "skiers only" mountain, one with

AREA



narrowly cut runs that fail to even flirt into the trees, but I stand corrected. Panorama is a huge mountain, with over 2,800 acres of rideable terrain and 4,000 feet of vertical, and despite early season conditions, it was evident that there is an incredible variety of terrain, especially once conditions improve. And with the recent expansion of the Taynton Bowl, which is a massive, well-gladed bowl of challenging bowls and tree runs, there is a now a lot to ride at this little gem, from corduroy to steeps to technical chutes.

AFTER SPENDING SOME TIME with my lady friend, who was having a very difficult time trying to master her board, I headed out to explore the mountain. I was pleasantly surprised to see that all lifts were running, and that the mountain was enjoying a calm day in terms of turn out. Although it had been a few days since it snowed, I was able to find several decent lines to the east of the main express quad, the Champagne Express. Some of these areas still appeared to be closed, and as I tore by a cavalry of snow machines running full-throttle, I realized why. To the west of the Champagne Express I explored a treed area with crunchy, heavy snow that I often sunk into deeply, up to a foot or three; the snow was heavy and settled, but it still felt refreshing. Moving up the mountain, I found that the upper runs, like the "Outer Limits" and the

"Extreme Dream Zone," were in rather dire circumstances: the snow was patchy and windblown, and what was remaining was icy.

In Upper Mountain, there were a number of challenging runs that opened into tight passes and coves mingling in and out of the thicker tree growth—really fun stuff, but definitely something I should have been sporting a lid for. The fresh tracks and tight runs definitely compensated for the spotty upper mountain, and also for the new Taynton Bowl's being closed, which I had been looking forward to riding. Consistently impressed, I stopped at a lookout and caught an incredible view of the sun dipping into the breath-taking Columbia Valley. In the sinking sun, I took my final ride of the day right down to my patio.

When I arrived, the beginner was already on the couch. She had spent the day at the towrope and was happy with her experience. I had failed to convince her to even try the chairlift, which she viewed as a treacherous monstrosity that she could never understand; she felt that if she were to appear vulnerable to the machine, it would surely consume her. The mountain was rapidly vacating and the guest village was beginning to look like a ghost town. The darkness was taking over; bright stars filled the mountain sky. Andrea and I were both exhausted, so we ended our day with a quiet, relaxing soak in the hot tub under the dark B.C. peaks. ☺

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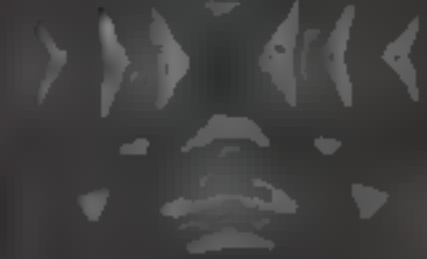
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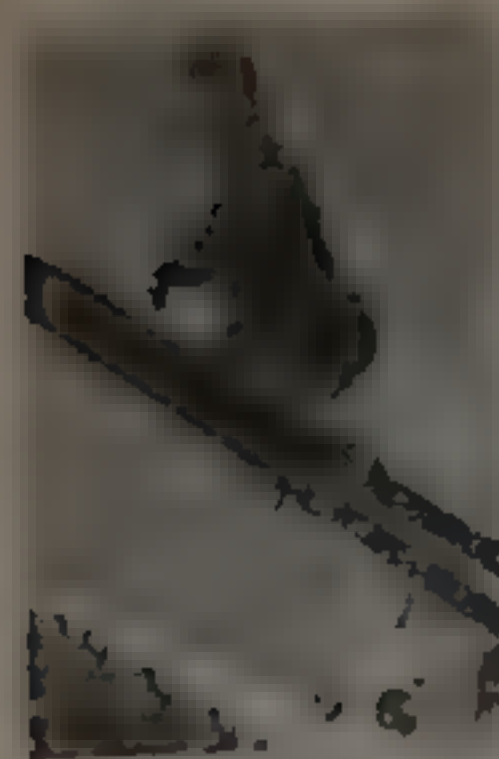
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ski tips

By COLIN CATHREA

Pole position

Ever dropped your pole off the chair, or skied without poles for any length of time? It drives me crazy. I feel like I've regressed 20 years in my technique. But at the same time, it's a good reminder of how important that perfect balance point is when you ski. I use carbon fibre ski poles that weigh next to nothing, but take them away and I ski as if I'd downed a bottle of wine. Obviously, the pole plant is a very important part of turning effectively. So what is the proper technique for a plant?

The standard arm position is easy to describe in this way: picture yourself with a full tray of drinks walking through the lodge, and that's where your hands should be when you ski (more or less; you're not Frankenstein). Keeping your arms in this position when you plant the pole is key. If you plant and ski by the pole it causes a chain reaction of events that screw up your balance and almost every other

aspect of a good turn.

The pole swing is used primarily to guide our body movement across our skis and into the new turn. The swing motion comes mostly from the hand and wrist—your grip should remain relaxed. If you bend your wrist a lot to swing the pole, you are probably holding on too tight. The direction of the swing is key—swinging the pole tip in the direction you want your body to travel. For long turns, swing the pole just a little downhill of the direction the skis are pointing. As your turns get shorter, swing the pole more directly down the hill. No matter the size or quickness of the turn, keep the swing smooth and rhythmical, in tempo with your turns.

The term "pole plant" fools many people into thinking the pole tip must be firmly jabbed into the ground—not so! As your pole swing ends, the pole touch should be just that—a light touch at about the same time your skis are moving into the new turn. For bumps or heavy snow, you can use a little bit stronger touch. It may also occur a little earlier in the turn to help stabilize your upper body, but don't let your hand (or upper body) get driven backwards. Hands must remain up and forward.

The pole touch is a signal that you've completed a turn in balance and are moving into a new turn. Think of the touch as your indicator of balance: eyes and hands up, skis rolling across the bases to the new edges, and the pole tip smoothly engaging the snow. ♡



fall lines

By HART GOLBECK

Hey Santa, is it too late to ask for more snow at Castle?

Castle Mountain near Pincher Creek temporarily closed their slopes on Monday, December 26, and they will remain closed until snow conditions improve. Although there is a significant base at the top, there are only 20 centimetres at the bottom, and with evening temperatures staying above zero, this base just continues to melt away. It's been tough at Castle the last few seasons. Unlike Jasper and Banff where the entire winter economy is primarily based upon skier numbers, at Castle there are just a

few restaurants and accommodations. Nonetheless, hundreds of workers are affected for the umpteenth time. I've been there the last two Februaries and conditions have been fantastic but the winter starts leave much to be desired. Come on, Old Man Winter, give them a break and wreak a blizzard or two upon them. I'm sure they won't mind.

Two medal finishes... and a partridge in a pear tree

One of Canada's top skiers, Thomas Grandi, gave himself a couple great Christmas presents last week: a World Cup bronze in a giant slalom and a silver medal in the ever-difficult slalom event. This season, Canadians have posted podium finishes in all four alpine skiing events, which include downhill, super-giant slalom, giant slalom and slalom. (A simplified explanation of the difference between the race disciplines is that the number of gates skiers must navigate increases from downhill to slalom. More gates means slower speeds and more turns.)

With the Olympics fast approaching, the European ski community is

starting to take notice of our sudden, persistent rise to the top. It looks like Ken Read's new Canadian ski program is starting to take off.

Pipe dreams

The halfpipe at Sunshine Village is now open. Its four-metre walls and 100-metre length should challenge the best of the boarders. Along with the pipe, the terrain park also opened with all the regular fun stuff like boxes, rails and jumps. All of these features are easily accessible from the Strawberry chair.

Powder 8s

The regional Powder 8 championships are coming to Fernie on February 3-5. In this event, skiers pair up to carve perfect figure-eights in untracked powder. If you've got a good ski buddy and have what it takes, get in touch with them and head on down. Best of all, the winners advance to the World Championships at Mike Wiegele's Heli-Ski operation at Blue River B.C. Call 1-866-633-7643 for more information. ♡

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Grand Canyon

Red Deer's Canyon Ski Area proves you don't need a lot of vertical to make a good snow park

By COLIN CATHREA

Hidden down in the Red Deer River valley is the Canyon Ski Area, a little gem of a hill that has been in operation for over 30 years. As I drive down the old road, the memories come flooding back: so many ski races, family parties, and good times. In fact, after racing full-out, balls-to-the-wall downhill courses like Lake Louise and Whistler, this is where I claimed my one and only downhill victory.

The "top to bottom" race is an old tradition that Canyon hosted for many years, but they were forced to stop it after some guy, wearing a few hundred pounds of scuba weights to speed him up, crashed and almost killed himself.

Like most old ski hills in Alberta, Canyon started with a little rope tow for the local cowboys who wanted to

rip it up on their wooden planks. Today it caters to an ever-expanding local population with an avid ski community. Canyon Manager Lorraine Martinek explains that it's still mostly kids who are populating the hill, however. "People here are making good money and they do like to ski," she says. "But it seems they work so hard that it's tough to get time to enjoy it."

Red Deer is a young and active city, and Canyon caters to beginner skier and boarders, as well as Olympic racing hopefuls and freestyle-event athletes. It has a really decent pitch that will challenge any rider, and the beautiful river valley is a great place to hold a big party or wedding.

For me, Canyon holds some vivid memories, mainly because of the serious trouble I got in for jump-

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ing the lodge. Yes, you read that right: we jumped the day lodge. We knew we would be in deep shit, but we did it anyway. Me and a couple of ski-racing buddies pulled down the fence above the lodge, and jumped over about 50 people putting their skis on after lunch. The old lodge at Canyon was about halfway down the hill, built back into the valley so the roof met the hillside. If you timed it right, you could ski over the ski racks and front doors, freaking out the unsuspecting patrons below. Unfortunately, the hill's operators caught up with us and basically banned us for life. I didn't tell this to Martinek to start off our chat.

I USED TO RACE quite a bit at Canyon. It seems strange to pack up the station wagon and take off down Highway 2 only to pull off in Red Deer, but we did it for the vertical. With a starting gate above the hill on a wheat field and the finish gate over the road, down on the Red Deer

River, there was a sufficient vertical drop to have the slalom race sanctioned by the Fédération Internationale de Ski (FIS). That meant that the points we earned would be ranked with FIS national teams throughout the world. In other words, we could race in a river valley in Red Deer and be ranked with Ken Read and Steve Podbourski.

Anyway, enough memories: let's get back to the present. Freshly made snow, grooming, and night skiing are what make this place tick. Like most "urban" ski hills, Canyon has dedicated its resources to beginners and park rats. As Canyon proves, you don't need 1,000 feet of vertical to build an awesome snow park. This is another reason why future members of Team Canada will be groomed here. It stands to reason: Canyon is the perfect environment for learning the basics of both racing and riding. If you are in the area on business or pleasure, drive a few minutes east of Red Deer and check this place out. ☐

The EasyRider Condition Report

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Local

Rabbit Hill 60 cm base
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Alberta

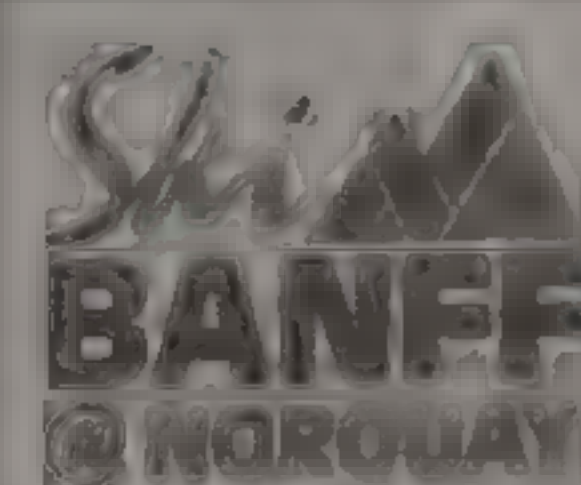
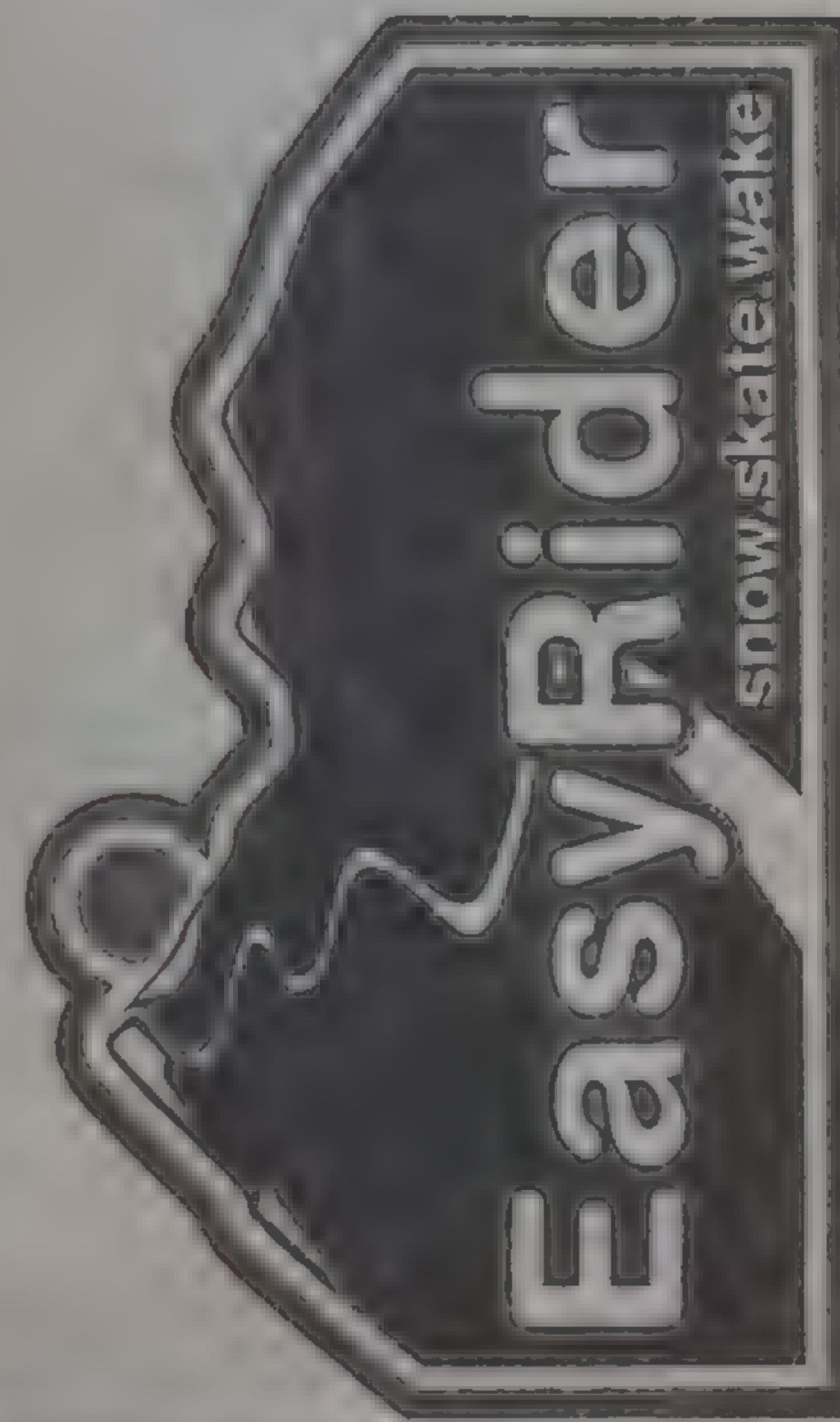
Castle Mtn. 13 cm in last 5 days, rain has caused temp. resort closure
Can Olympic Park 100 cm base
Fortress 1 cm in last day, not yet open
Lake Louise 23 cm in last 4 days, 100 cm base
Marmot Basin 9 cm in last 4 days, 50 cm base
Mt. Norquay 54 cm base
Nakiska 44 cm base
Pass Powderkeg 55 cm base
Sunshine 11 cm in last day, 115 cm base
Tawatinaw 80% open

B.C.

Apex 2 cm in last day, 70 cm base
Big White 6 cm in last day, 110 cm base
Fairmont 10 of 14 runs open
Fernie 41 cm in last 7 days, 134 base
Kicking Horse 53 cm in last 7 days, 97 base
Kimberley 26 cm in last 7 days, 70 base
Mt Washington 20 cm in the last day, 60 cm base
Panorama 25 cm in last 7 days, 71 cm base
Powder King 10 cm in last day, 35 cm base
Powder Springs 80 cm in last 5 days, 50 cm base
Red Mountain 5 cm in last day, 119 cm base
Silver Star 8 cm in last day, 117 cm base
Sun Peaks 9 cm in last day, 83 cm base
Whistler Blackcomb no current info
Whitewater 6 cm in last day, 166 cm base

U.S.

Big Mountain 46 cm in last 7 days, 120 cm base
Big Sky Resort 2' in last day, 32' base
Crystal Mountain 9' in last day, 46' base
49 Degrees North 6' in last day, 50' base
Lookout Pass 5' in last day, 48' base
Mt Spokane 3' in last day, 34' base
Schweitzer 2 cm in last day, 47' base
Silver Mtn 4 cm in last day, 31' base
Sun Valley 3' in last day, 61' base



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FILM

Rumours of grandeur

The premise behind *Rumor Has It* turns out to be way less fun than it sounds

By TYSON KABAN

Rumour has it that Jennifer Aniston and Vince Vaughn are an item. Yeah, it's totally true. People calls them "Vincifer," which is so adorable, and good for Jen; she's had a rough year and someone as down-to-earth as Vince would be perfect for her. I heard that they met on the set of their latest film, some sort of romantic-comedy called *The Break Up*. Then again, it could have been during Jen's topless photo shoot for GQ. Huh. Or maybe it was during the filming of *Mr. and Mrs. Smith*? Maybe it wasn't Angelina that broke Brad and Jen up after all, but that sly dog Vince. Yep, I'm sure that's it. Or is it? Let me confer with the latest issue of *US Weekly* and I'll get back to you.

Okay, I promise there's a clever film review of *Rumor Has It*, the half-baked "sequel" to the 1967 classic *The Graduate*, in here somewhere, but that's not really what's important right now. What everyone wants to know is if Jennifer Aniston is actually able to star and carry a film all on her own, after *Friends*, after Brad. That is, if her talent and appeal actually live up to Hollywood's hype. Well, if her performance in *Rumor Has It* is any indication, it's that Aniston's worth as an actress is less than the \$1.99 price tag of *Weekly Scoop*.

There are problems right from the start of this awful, awful movie, when we're introduced to Aniston's character Sarah, who's on a plane to Pasadena to attend her sister's wedding. We're informed that ever since she can remember, Sarah has never felt like a part of her own family. She doesn't drive slow like her dad Earl (See *Foot Locker*'s Richard Jenkins); she isn't as blonde as her bouncy sister Annie (Mena Suvari), and she doesn't even know if she's anything like her own mother who died when Sarah was nine.

On her quest of self-discovery, Sarah discovers that her mother and her lush of a

grandmother Katharine (Shirley MacLaine) were the inspiration for *The Graduate*. In short, Grandma Katharine and her daughter both slept with the same man 30 years ago. So Sarah takes it upon herself to track down the man in question and meets the infamous stud Beau Burroughs (Kevin Costner) at a conference in San Francisco, only to become the third generation of hussies dumb enough to sleep with the same man. But here comes the twist: Sarah might just be Beau's daughter, but I'm going to tell you now that she's not his daughter. Because incest? Not so romantically comedic.

THE FILM'S most obvious flaws come from Ted Griffin's weak, convoluted script. *Rumor Has It* constantly vacillates between saccharine drama and zany situational comedy, with last-minute director Rob Reiner's stunted pace, weak transitions and unnecessary voiceovers that do nothing to improve upon the script or explain the film's confusing storyline.

If the film does have a high point, it's when Shirley MacLaine's Katharine appears from her cloud of bourbon to deliver some great one-liners, most of which involve the phrase "blunt testicular trauma." Trust me; it's funnier than it sounds. And Kathy Bates makes a quick appearance, inducing laughs the second she makes her way onscreen as a bleach-blond friend of the family, wearing a muumuu and calling the alcohol-filled Bloody Mary she's clutching her favourite lady.

For some reason, the film is set in 1997, and it's quite disappointing to see that Aniston herself refused to make the film more authentic by getting the "Rachel haircut" she popularized back in the day. But again, the film's technical and expositional shortcomings aren't *Rumor Has It*'s only problems. Aniston, spoiled by her success on TV, is just a boring actress who has abused her spot on the A-list, and she shouldn't be allowed to carry a film on her own—at least until she's no longer a victim of Hollywood overexposure. ☹

RUMOR HAS IT

Directed by Rob Reiner • Written by Ted Griffin •
Starring Jennifer Aniston, Kevin Costner and Shirley MacLaine • Now playing

Restoring the faith

Paul Schrader's *Dominion: Prequel to the Exorcist* isn't perfect, but more interesting than Renny Harlin's version

by JOSEF BRAUN

It's an all-too-familiar story, though perhaps a bit more pathetic than most. After its original director John Frankenheimer fell ill, Morgan Creek Productions hired Paul Schrader to helm what is now being awkwardly referred to as *Dominion: Prequel to the Exorcist*. A long-time admirer of the grandiose religious metaphor in William Friedkin's original *Exorcist*, Schrader wholeheartedly threw himself into the project. But when an early cut of the film was delivered to the head of Morgan Creek, he balked at the fact that it wasn't enough of a horror genre picture, even though Schrader apparently followed the shooting script to the letter. Unable to fire Schrader, Morgan Creek simply abandoned the film, kept the basic script (by William Wisher Jr. and novelist Caleb Carr), the film's star (Stellan Skarsgård) and its famous cinematographer (Vittorio Storaro), and did it all over again from scratch, hoping *Die Hard 2* director Renny Harlin could apply the desired genre effects. Harlin's *Exorcist: The Beginning* (2004) was a real horror all right, complete with kids getting ripped apart by CGI hyenas and a high ranking on the list of worst films of I've ever had to review. It also bombed miserably at the box office.

Schrader's version, meanwhile, did eventually receive an extremely limited theatrical release in a handful of American cities with zero fanfare last May before being ushered into video stores, which is where you'll find it now. Schrader's film is more of a brooding apocalyptic tale of demonic mystery, colonialist disaster and faith being rekindled in the darkest hour and, indeed, a more subdued, thoughtful affair in a hurry to revel in splatter. It's hardly a perfect film, and certainly not among Schrader's best, but it is infinitely more interesting than the film it was dumped for and one that should now be considered essential to anyone with an interest in the Friedkin film or in theological drama in general.

SET IN EAST AFRICA in 1947, *Dominion* has Father Merrin (Skarsgård, in the role fellow Swede Max von Sydow played in the original *Exorcist*) in the midst of an ongoing rabbinical and the very depths of a crisis of faith, one he's been spiralling into since becoming implicated in a Nazi atrocity during the war.

In the desert as leader of an archaeological team, Merrin discovers an ancient church, buried in sand and still in pristine condition, that was built directly on top of a pre-Christian temple, one in which a large, horned demon features prominently. Wisher and Carr have taken this brutish convention missionary



Christians had of erecting churches directly over pre-existing sites of worship and given it an intriguing twist, one that honours Christian mythology while still condemning the futility of the colonialist suppression of established culture.

Demonic possession is something

much more slippery in *Dominion* than in other *Exorcist* films, something closer to a disease fluid in its variety of manifestations. The opening of this particular Pandora's Box results in bloodthirsty mad cows, maggot-strewn still births and the miraculous healing of a severely deformed boy, an escalation of events that ultimately lead to Merrin confronting not only a corporeal demon down in the temple but also his own personal demons in one of the film's most magical moments, one which begins with snow falling indoors, links back to an earlier *Spellbound*-inspired dream sequence, and which echoes some key elements of Schrader's script for *The Last Temptation of Christ*. Given the power of such scenes, it's an annoyance that *Domin-*



ion, like Harlin's film, also features some distracting and bad CGI effects. More problematic however are a couple of the performances, particularly Gabriel Mann as a one-note, blandly earnest and tirelessly preachy young priest. With guys like that around, it's just too easy to root for Satan. ☹

DOMINION: PREQUEL TO THE EXORCIST
Directed by Paul Schrader • Written by William Wisher Jr. and Caleb Carr • Starring Stellan Skarsgård, Gabriel Mann and Billy Crawford • Now on DVD

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Big box of horrors

The films of *The Val Lewton Horror Collection* will haunt your dreams

By JOSEF BRAUN

In the 1940s, following a career of writing everything from pulp novels to poetry to overly imaginative journalism and a stressful apprenticeship under producer David O. Selznick, Val Lewton took a job heading the horror B-movie unit at RKO. After the fiscal fiasco of *Citizen Kane*, RKO's new bottom-line was pragmatism or "showmanship over genius." Lewton was given low bud-

gets, tight schedules, contract actors and existing sets and had to arbitrarily develop films to accompany sensationalistic audience-tested titles literally ripped from tabloid headlines. It was a job for a hard-working sucker, an eager beginner or a desperate has-been, but over a period of about six years, Lewton utilized the

REVUE DVD

freedom hidden in these constraints to produce some of the most richly mysterious, sophisticated and elegantly suggestive films to ever fall under the horror-thriller genre.

Lewton embodied the notion of producer as *auteur* completely, devel-

oping projects from the ground-up, personally giving each its final (uncredited) rewrite and peppering the best of them with his own peculiar fears, insights, obsessions and memories. Working from the same palate as *film noir*, he made movies for literate adults drawn to seductive pessimism and complicated characters, for lovers of angular shadows and pools of darkness. He'd infuse his films with all these elements, form a clear narrative, throw in a love story and deliver the whole package in less than 70 minutes.

Before picking up *The Val Lewton Horror Collection*, I only vaguely knew who Lewton was; in hindsight, his work was a gaping hole in my film knowledge. Easily one of the finest DVD discoveries of the year, these nine films and one documentary spread over five discs are nicely arranged into double features. At least five are strange masterpieces (which I'll briefly describe) that reward repeated viewings and are accompanied by superb audio commentaries by historians and filmmakers. While some barely function as clear examples of the horror genre, rest assured they do get under your skin and haunt your dreams.

THE FIRST OF THREE collaborations with director Jacques Tournier, *Cat People* (1942) introduced Lewton's characteristic tension between myth and reality. Set in contemporary New York, it concerns a love triangle dominated by central European immigrant Irena (the inimitable Simone Simon), a simultaneously sensual and sexually repressed loner who fears that erotic stimulation might revive an ancient family curse resulting in transfiguration and animalistic violence. While Irena's exoticism and ostensible mental illness provides the story's latent threat, the surface ordinariness and innocence of husband Oliver and amorous Girl Friday co-worker Alice disguises a fundamentally predatory nature that extends to every character. Brilliantly shot by Nick Musuraca, the film shifts between well-lit and shadowy worlds where danger gains potency through being unseen.

Tournier considered *I Walked with a Zombie* (1943) his finest film, and it's easy to see why. Conceived by Lewton as a sort of "*Jane Eyre* in the tropics," it's one of the most uniquely unsettling movies I've ever seen, rife with alcoholism, nihilism, adultery, gossip, smiling malice,

thundering ecstatic ritual and music, post-colonial guilt, creepy Calypso singers and chillingly beautiful nocturnal cane fields and seascapes. A Canadian nurse is sent to a fictional isle to care for a rich woman in a catatonic/somnambulist/zombie state but gets lured into a world of obsessive love and voodoo. A stone-eyed, mute sentry guides her, and us, and he, more than any other character in the Lewton canon,

evokes the embracing of death with elegant, transfixing economy.

Its carnal pleasures may seem just a tad trashier, but I'm no less fascinated by *The Leopard Man* (1943). The opening 13 minutes alone make a spellbindingly rhythmic and absolutely brutal stand-alone overture: it establishes the restless movement of one character to another in a way that ends up snaking through the mesmerizing uncentred story; with well-selected detail, it introduces the smalltown New Mexico tabloid-show milieu and the escape of a deadly leopard being exploited as a shameless showpiece, and it quickly leads to the unforgettable, inky-black vortex awaiting a peasant girl under a lonely train bridge. A precursor to *Psycho*, the broken narrative strings and the invoking of private traps ends with

both a chase through a ritual pre-Columbian procession meant to remind townsfolk of death's inescapability and a poetic confirmation of our inability to comprehend the forces that compel us.

WITH TOURNIER **BUMPED UP** to A-list pictures, *The 7th Victim* (1943) was placed in the directorial hands of former editor Mark Robson, who, while perhaps less distinctive, proved just as effective a conjurer of Lewton's nightmare visions and juggler of densely layered narratives. The story of a young woman leaving private school to find her missing sister and

sole surviving family member, the film ushers us into an urban labyrinth of Satanism, secrets, psychoanalysis and suicidal despair. The longing for oblivion is given a highly unusual, sensitive reverence, accentuated not only by the numerous peripheral stories of anxiety and failure, but also by the romance that springs from the ashes of loss with fatalistic irony. A set piece involving a propped-up corpse on the NYC subway is just one of the highlights.

As flowing with weird touches as *The 7th Victim* is, *The Curse of the Cat People* (1944), the directorial debut of Robert Wise, is probably Lewton's most deeply, nakedly personal film, with many details taken directly from his childhood experiences to imprint the film with palpable authenticity. Hardly the routine sequel the title implies, *Curse* balances elements of fairy tales with the real, hallucinatory isolation felt by children prone to daydreams, as well as a very adult subtext regarding desire and the unrelenting

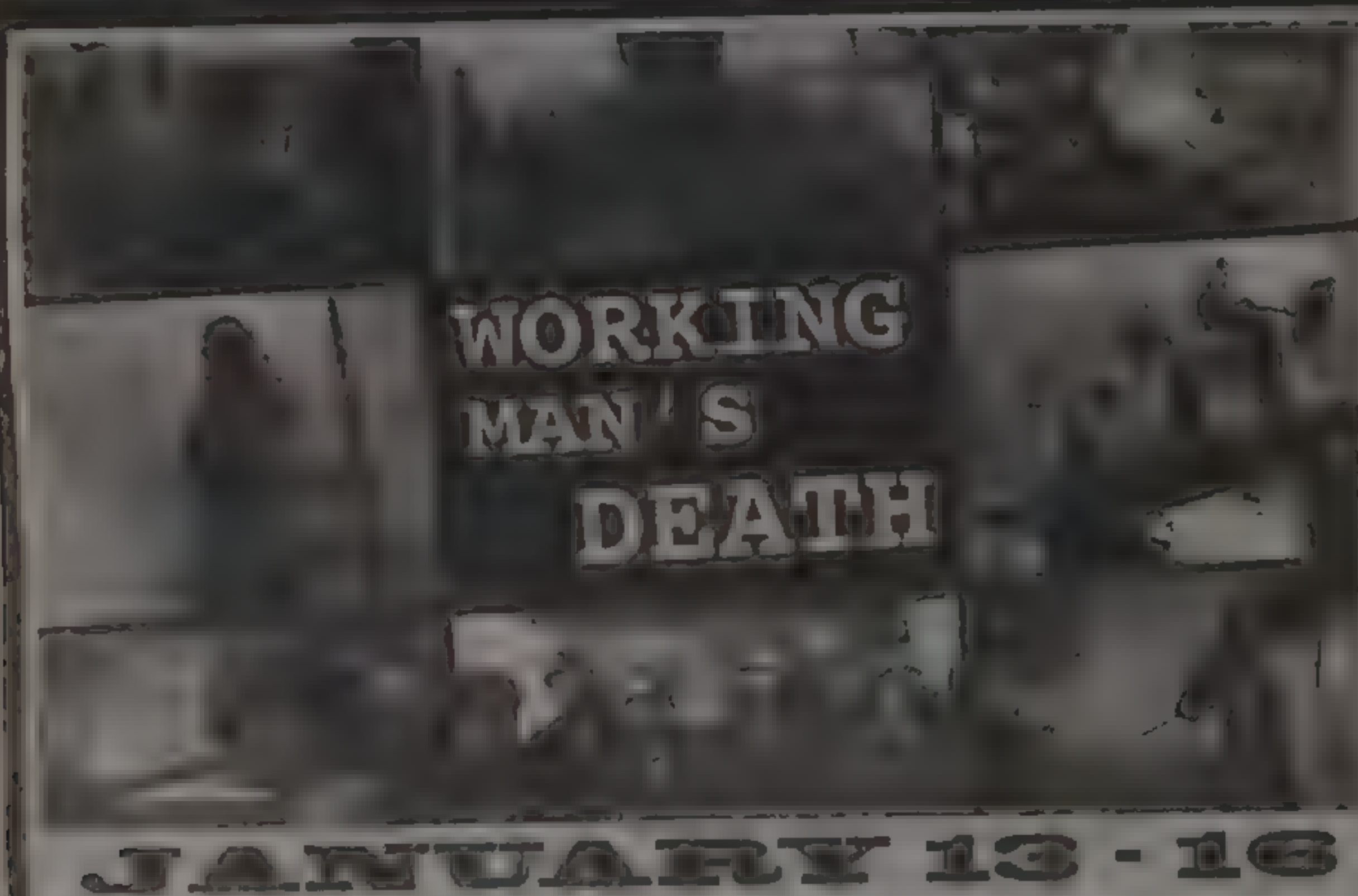
grips of nostalgia. Oliver and Alice, now married, calmly live out their ordinary dreams—until an encounter with a demented elderly neighbor sends their daughter Amy to a new level of interior fantasy inhabited by none other than a ghostly Irena. Regarded as a groundbreaking work by child psychologists, the film is infused with wonder, tenderness and a sadness linked to the literal and figurative distances that separate parents and children.

Lewton's career, like his life, was short and frustrated. He died of a heart attack at the age of 46. But he left a legacy that, through history as much as artistry, will never be repeated. ☐

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The Year of the Uncas

Local alt-country fixtures
The Uncas look back on
a wildly successful 2005

BY MIKE LAROCQUE

When the Uncas ring in the New Year this Saturday at the Black Dog, it will not only serve as a celebration of another year gone by but also of an incredibly successful 12 months for the band. They've released two full-length albums—*Sunny Uncas* and September's *Drop the Ball*—to solid reviews, and it seems that having product out on the market is just what it takes to hold the attention of the listening public. This year alone the Edmonton group embarked on two separate 30-date cross-Canada tours supporting their recordings, a feat that serves as a badge of honour

for the ever-growing band, even if it's an undeniably draining experience.

"It can be really tiring, but we wouldn't go out and do it if it wasn't fun," says Futch Uncas, lead singer of the five-piece alt country act. "Our first stretch on the last tour had us making it to Halifax in six days, and we played shows on the first five. By the time you hit the sack after finishing and packing up it would be five in the morning and you'd still have another day of driving and performing ahead of you. There were definitely

some shows we thought were going to be brutal because we felt like zombies, but somehow we're

always alright and set to go when we get onstage."

Futch, along with brother Sook and fellow bandmates Merle Kasper, John Carpenter and Ace Wilkinson, have firmly established

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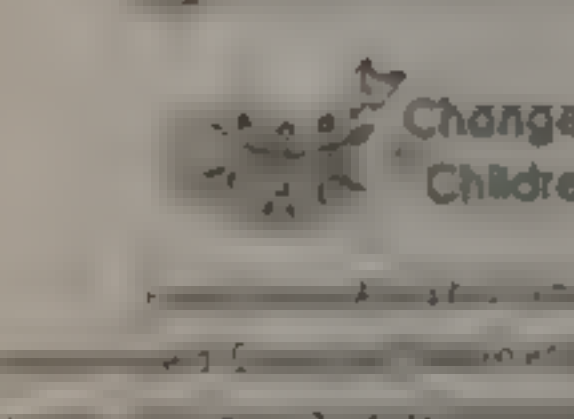
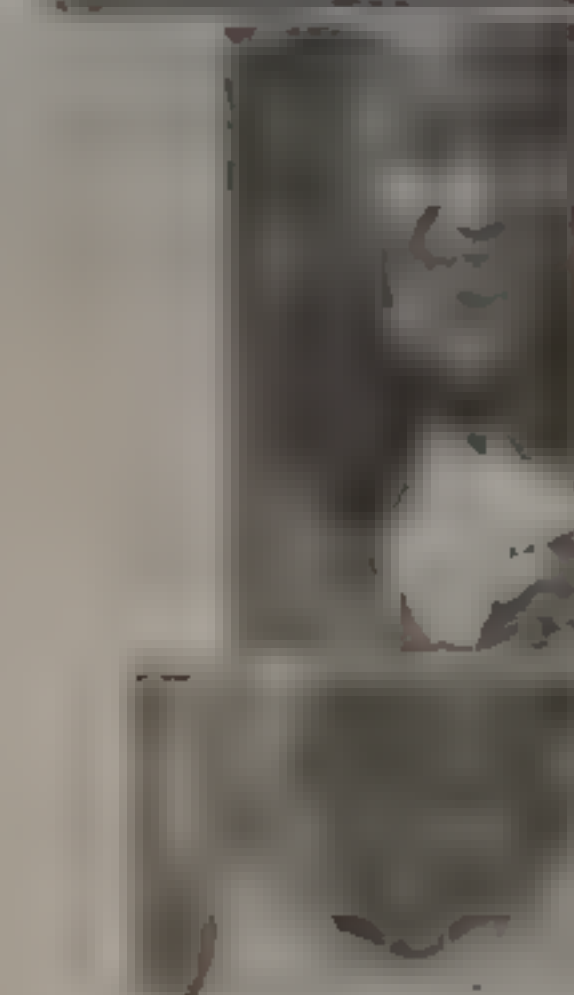
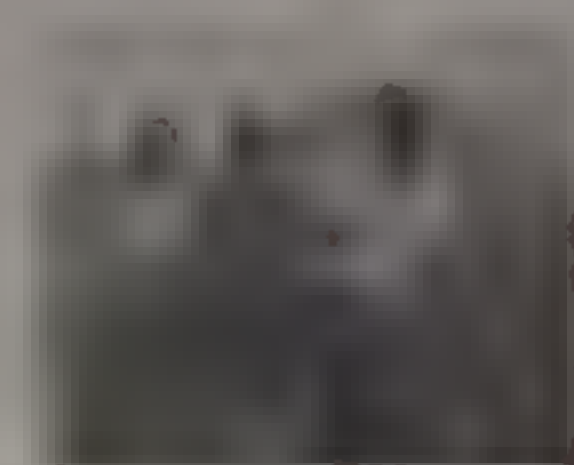
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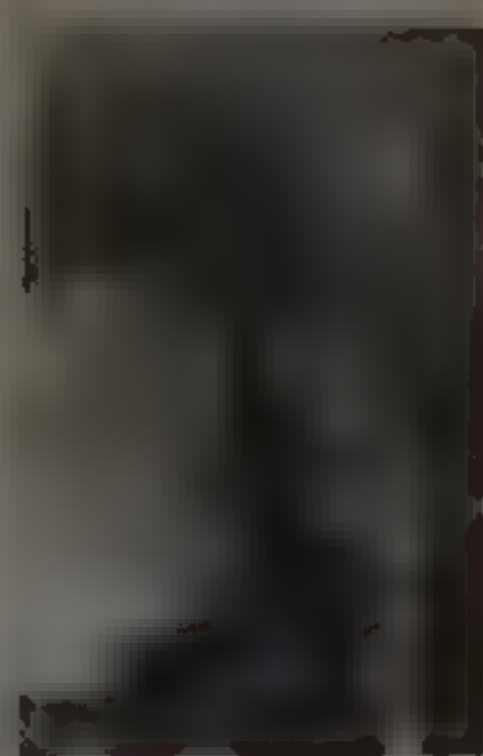
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MUSIC



music notes

BY ROSS MOROZ

Lazersnake • With Reuben Wu, Shout Out Out Out Out and Dietzche V. & The Abominable Snowman • Starlite Room • Sat, Dec 31

When *Music Notes* first heard about Lazersnake this summer, it was due to a semi-official *Vue Weekly* office poll that had nearly unanimously proclaimed the group as having the coolest name of any band, ever. Of course, none of us had actually heard Lazersnake at this point, but once we did we quickly became enamoured with the post-modern, minimalist electro-pop produced by the mustachioed, bizarrely dressed duo of Evan Frost and Scott Koladich, two self-proclaimed "gentlemen fags" whose wardrobe and persona is as infectiously odd as their music.

Since then, Lazersnake's membership has doubled with the addition of bassist Jake Swanson and drummer Mike Pearson, but despite this more traditional lineup configuration, the band's members insist their music remains anything but.

"I think being a two-piece band is sort of limiting," explains Frost, resplendent as ever in a turquoise blazer and salmon shirt.

"We wouldn't have made this decision if we didn't think the music was 100 times better because of it," adds Koladich, he of the brown tweed jacket and western string tie.

Although the group has performed once before as a quartet ("The Halloween show was our first show as a four-piece, but since we played first not a lot of people were there to see us, which was cool, because it was sort

of like a test run," notes Koladich), this week's New Year's Eve extravaganza will be many of the band's fans' first glimpse at the new, improved Lazersnake. And while the group might seem like a tough club to gain membership in, *Music Notes* has been assured that the new additions have been fully indoctrinated—that is, they've all been let in on "the joke."

"It's all about dancing and singing and laughing, and Lazersnake allows us to do all of that every day. I think we're able to hold down soul-sucking jobs because of that, because this band sort of re-fills the tanks, you know?" Pearson explains. "If it ever stopped being a joke, it wouldn't be as valuable, because part of what's fun about it is being able to laugh at what you're doing while you're doing it, and I think it's really important to be able to look at yourself with a certain degree of humour."

This is also how Lazersnake justify their admittedly (and, possibly, intentionally) ridiculous appearance. "People have a stigma against dorks, and moustaches, and your sexuality, and the clothes you wear, and we enjoy that," says Frost. "It allows people who otherwise wouldn't accept us to put us into categories that always blow our minds. Like, we got asked if we had a moustache club when we went for breakfast the other day."

"It's almost easier for people once they know we're musicians," he continues. "Scott was carrying his keyboard as we walked down the street to get here this evening, and more people looked at us with acceptance than ever before. It was like we were holding a sign: you could see people going 'oh, they're not fags, they're not freaks, they're a band,' which gives everyone the medicine they need to accept us, apparently."

James T. Kirks • With Southside Riots and the Fat Dave Crime Wave • Econolounge • Sat, Dec 31

James T. Kirks frontman Rob Wright is in a bit of a strange situation. After nearly a decade of spreading his talent

across a myriad number of local bands, Wright currently claims membership in just one local act, the incredibly venerable James T. Kirks, although he is quick to point out that he doesn't find this situation all that unsettling.

"It doesn't feel weird to just be in the Kirks, because I've always been in the Kirks, and have been since I was a teenager," says Wright of the band he started with brother Ted and lifelong friend Silas Grenis way back in 1994. "The three of us are so close. Ted and I are brothers, and Silas is like our little brother—he's from the same rural area we're from, north of Stony Plain there. It's more like a family than a band, and the band will continue indefinitely."

Despite having been together for over a decade, though, the Kirks have never released a full-length record, although this is currently being ameliorated as the band continues to record their debut album with producer Ian Martin at Edmonton's Twilight Living Room studios. And while no release date is set, *Music Notes* was eager to know how the rough mixes are sounding at this point.

"You ask any band that questions and of course they're going to say it sounds fucking awesome," Wright laughs. "To tell you the truth, originally we went in and recorded the bed tracks over the course of about eight days, and then we basically decided to scrap all of it because we thought it sounded kind of shitty. Well, okay, it wasn't, like, shitty, but it just wasn't up to snuff, you know? So then we took another crack at it, and we were really much more in the groove the second time around, and we banged out all the tracks in a weekend and they sound really tight and more inspired now, so yeah, it sounds pretty good."

Even though the Kirks no longer have to compete for Wright's attention with the recently disbanded Les Tabernacles ("It was time for it to die, I guess," Wright says of the Tabs. "I kind of wish we'd made another record but the stars just didn't align, you know?"), the band will soon have to deal with the challenge of having

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members spread over two provinces, Wright is preparing to relocate to Vancouver to start a new job. The James T. Kirks notwithstanding, though, *Music Notes* had to ask: is Wright about to become one of those, them, Vancouver guys?

"You mean like a faggy haircut and turtle-neck guy?" Wright asks indignantly. "Actually I have pair of sandals that I bought a road trip years ago that I just threw out, so no, I have no plans of becoming a dirty fucking hippie. Don't worry about that."

Hot Little Rocket • With Chad VanGaalen, Field & Stream and A Sound System • Sidetrack Café • Sat, Dec 31 When organizing prospective tours, many independent Alberta bands look to the east, hoping to play in highly populated areas in Ontario and Quebec. Calgary's Hot Little Rocket, however, got slightly more ambitious this fall, and have somewhat believably just returned from a wild-successful tour that took them to a highly more populated area just a little bit further east.

"We opened up a Myspace.com account, and a friend of ours who happened to be living in China found us there and was like 'oh my god, I remember you guys from when I lived in Calgary, you guys are awesome, you could come play in China!'" recalls assistant Patrick May. "Obviously we were like 'whatever,' you know, like 'what's ever going to happen, but we said, 'okay, well, you set something up and we'll see what happens.'"

"We kind of forgot about it," he continues, "but a few months later she emailed back and told us she had approached the Chinese government and the Canadian embassy and they were very interested in sponsoring us to come over and play this music festival in Beijing as part of the celebrations around the 35th anniversary of cultural relations between Canada and China. As soon as we said yes the Chinese government requested our lyrics so that they could approve the content, and within a couple days they contacted us

Ruben Wu

Continued from page 27

darkest we've done, and I don't know why," he says with a shrug. "*Light and Magic* was dark as well, but dark in a kind of sleeker way. We recorded that album in LA, and obviously it was new, and the sun was shining; we were playing Joy Division in the car stereo as we were driving around, and it completely changed how we thought about Joy Division—'Transmission,' for instance is such a happy song, but sleekly dark, too.

"Whereas *Witching Hour*, I think mainly because it was recorded in Liverpool," he continues with a dry sarcasm, "it definitely has more—there's more yearning in it, I think. I think it's also just because we've been touring a lot, to go back to that again, and touring is a really intense experience."

OF COURSE, it's not just an annoying genre label that's been dropped and a new, darker edge that's been found. It seems as though people are



Chick Magnet • Sidetrack Café • Wed, Dec 21 • **reVUE** While the rest of the world wrestles with its collective conscience over the crass commercialism of Christmas season, at least there are some who are trying to do their part to combat the holiday's excesses. The band has been pushing a free music revolution, playing for nothing every opportunity, including at the Sidetrack Café. The band seemed particularly motivated by the holiday's excesses on Christmas morning and decided to play a free show at the Sidetrack Café.

to let us know we'd been approved and that they were sending us plane tickets and money so we had better get our visas and passports in order."

The band was, unsurprisingly, a little unsure of how Chinese audiences would respond to their indie-rock sound, but these worries dissipated fairly quickly upon their arrival. "We didn't really know what kind of response to expect, so we were shocked when we showed up to play at this outdoor festival in front of 15,000 people, full-on Lollapalooza style," says a still-awestruck May. "It was bizarre, because obviously no one had ever heard of us there before, but all these kids had these brochures or whatever explaining who we were, so they were all really excited to see this

"Canadian band."

The band remained in the Peoples' Republic for a couple of weeks, playing several smaller club shows in and around the capital, and while many more political bands may have been reluctant to accept an offer from a Chinese government that has been vilified for its human rights record, the Rockets were more than willing to set aside any such idealism.

"This is obviously a once-in-a-lifetime thing for a band of our calibre," May states frankly. "When you get an opportunity to go and have an experience like we had, whatever your political feelings are about the Chinese government or human rights or Tibet are, I think you have to reserve them temporarily." ☐

finally starting to recognize the passion behind the mechanical noises, a development that Wu and the rest of the group have felt is long time coming. Ladytron has been characterized as a stark, cold group, but *Witching Hour* seems to be the sea change where critics have realized it's possible to be emotional without a "histrionic vocal performance or a full-on guitar solo," as Wu puts it.

"Anything can be emotional; playing a note like that," he explains, thumping his finger rhythmically on the table, "is really emotional; you don't have to really freak out to be emotional, and I think that's a really puerile observation to make. I guess people listen to our music, and just because we didn't shout a lot, or scream a lot, or bang the drums a lot, they thought we were stark and cold and emotionless."

That perception has certainly been dropped, if major press is any indication: Britain's *NME*, who have trumpeted the band since their first single, "He Took Her Out a Movie" but normally towed the "emotionless" line,

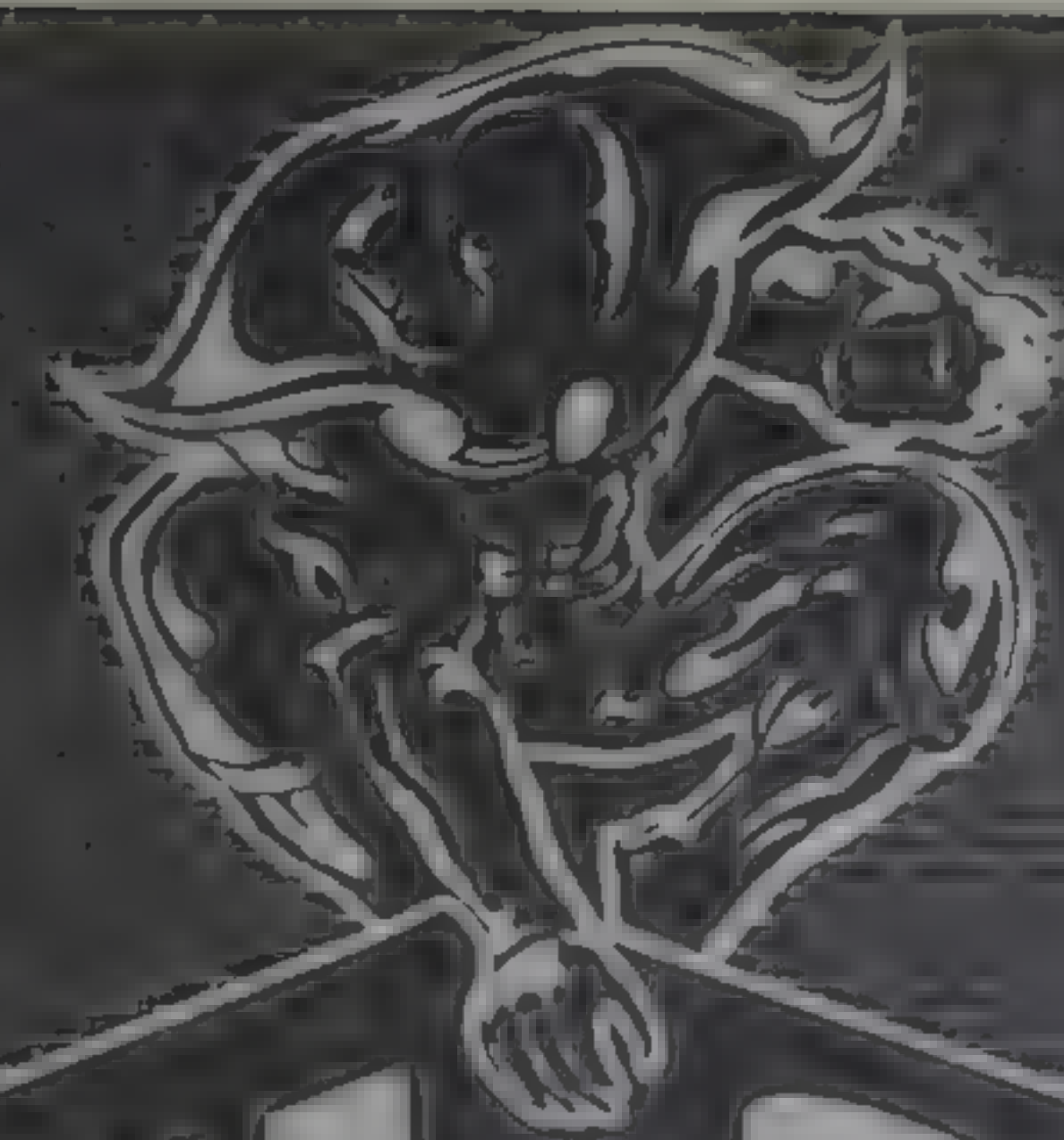
reviewed *Witching Hour* as "music to make one want to have sex."

"There was a reviewer who said about our first album, 604, 'There's a lot of bad sex in it.' There might be," says Wu dryly. "Then someone said of the second one, 'There's better sex in this one.' Now this one, people actually want to have sex to it. I've never had sex to it; I'd probably get really distracted, start thinking about the minutiae of each track."

"The sex thing is—well, all modern pop music has sex in it, because unless you're castrated, you're always going to write sexual songs; it's tied in with emotion and everything," Wu adds, though he maintains that Ladytron's brand of sex is a little different than your average pop song. "It's sex before AIDS, that's what *Witching Hour* is; when you didn't have to wear a condom, and it would be okay." ☐

RUBEN WU

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- 5 - RIHANNA - P.O.N.D. REMIX
- 6 - THE GAME - 50 CENT - HATE IT OR LOVE IT
- 7 - BLACK EYED PEAS - DON'T PHUNK WITH MY HEART
- 8 - DHT - LISTEN TO YOUR HEART
- 9 - CORY LEE - NAUGHTY SONG
- 10 - NATASHA BEDINGFIELD - THESE WORDS
- 11 - MASSARI - BE EASY
- 12 - 50 CENT - CANDYSHOP
- 13 - SNOOP DOGG/ PHARRELL - DROP IT LIKE IT'S HOT
- 14 - THE PUSSYCAT DOLLS - DON'T CHA
- 15 - SHAWN DESMAN - LET'S GO
- 16 - ALICIA KEYS - KARMIA
- 17 - EYE - GWEN STEFANI - RICH GIRL
- 18 - CIARA - LUDACRIS - OH
- 19 - CARL HENRY - I WISH
- 20 - AKON - LONELY
- 21 - BLACK EYED PEAS - MY HUMPS
- 22 - K-OS - CRABBUCKLE
- 23 - DIVINE BROWN - OLD SKOOL LOVE
- 24 - MISSY ELLIOTT - LOSE CONTROL
- 25 - JENNIFER LOPEZ - GET RIGHT
- 26 - 50 CENT - DISCO INFERNO
- 27 - NELLY - FAT JOE - GET IT POPPIN
- 28 - SEAN PAUL - WE BE BURNIN
- 29 - JULY BLACK - SWEAT OF YOUR BROW
- 30 - GWEN STEFANI - COOL
- 31 - CIARA - MISSY ELLIOTT - 1, 2 STEP
- 32 - MASSARI - SMILE FOR ME
- 33 - GAMES HOW WE DO
- 34 - DESTINY'S CHILD - LOSE YOUR BREATH
- 35 - GORILLAZ - FEEL GOOD INC.
- 36 - MARIAH CAREY - SHAKE IT OFF
- 37 - MAX GRANHAM - YESS
- 38 - OWNER OF A LONELY HEART
- 39 - PIMPIN' ALL OVER THE WORLD
- 40 - FRANKIE J - MORE THAN WORDS
- 41 - PRETTY RICKY - YOUR BODY
- 42 - SNOOP DOGG
- 43 - JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE - SIGNS
- 44 - K-OS - MAN I USED TO BE

- 45 - BOW WOW/ OMARION - LET ME HOLD YOU
- 46 - EMINEM - JUST LOSE IT
- 47 - USHER/ ALICIA KEYS - MY BOO
- 48 - DROP 4 - BETTER DAYS
- 49 - DAVID BANNER - PLAY
- 50 - BLACK EYED PEAS - DON'T LIE
- 51 - DESTINY'S CHILD - SOLDIER
- 52 - EMINEM - CALL ME
- 53 - CIARA - GOODIES
- 54 - ROSETTE - CRUSHED
- 55 - MARIO - LET ME LOVE YOU
- 56 - NELLY/ TIM MCGRAW - OVER AND OVER AGAIN
- 57 - ROW WOW/ CIARA - LIKE YOU
- 58 - JACKALOPE - SWOLEN MEMBERS - FEEL IT
- 59 - SWBATSHOP UNION - BROKEN RECORD
- 60 - CHRIS KNOX - RUN IT
- 61 - 50 CENT/ MOBB DEEP - OUTTA CONTROL
- 62 - KING - BENNIE MAN - MASSARI - SOUL ON FIRE
- 63 - RIHANNA - IF IT'S LIVIN' THAT YOU WANT
- 64 - JULY BLACK - STAY THE NIGHT
- 65 - JAT - Z - LINKIN PARK - NUMB ENCORE
- 66 - 50 CENT - JUST A LIL' BIT
- 67 - MADONNA - HUNG UP
- 68 - MARIAN CAREY - IT'S LIKE THAT
- 69 - TURAC - GHETTO GOSPEL
- 70 - T-PAIN - I'M SPRUNG
- 71 - K'NAAN - STRUGGLIN
- 72 - GWEN STEFANI - LUXURIOUS
- 73 - STREET FROG - AXEL F
- 74 - MARIAH CAREY - DON'T FORGET ABOUT US
- 75 - K-OS - CRUCIAL
- 76 - TRICK DADDY - SUGAR
- 77 - KANYE WEST - ADAM LEVINE - HEARD EM SAY
- 78 - THE PUSSYCAT DOLLS - STICKWITCH
- 79 - AKON - BELLY DANCER
- 80 - JELLESTONE - NELLY FURTADO - FRIENDAMINE
- 81 - TARAS - I LOVE YOU
- 82 - SHAWN DESMAN - RED HAIR
- 83 - JOHN LEGEND - ORDINARY PEOPLE
- 84 - PRETTY RICKY - GRIND WITH ME
- 85 - NATALIE - GOING CRAZY
- 86 - RAY ROBINSON - GIRLFRIEND
- 87 - AMERIE - ONE THING
- 88 - AKON/ YOUNG JEEZY - SOUL SURVIVOR - SIGNS
- 89 - KREESHA TURNER - BOUNCE WITH ME

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SIDETRACK CAFE Curtis

STARLITE ROOM

URBAN LOUNGE Mourning

WILD WEST SALOON Billy

ARMOURY Vintage Thursdays

BILLY BOY'S

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE

BUDDY'S DJ Squiggles, Yohko

DEAD END

DEAD END

FILTHY MCNASTY'S Punk Rock

GAS PUMP Ladies Nite

GINGUR SKY LOUNGE Urban

HALO Deep 'n' Delicious

HAVANA CLUB Urban, hip

KAS BAR Urban House

NEST Night: hip hop with DJ Odin

OVERTIME BOILER AND TAP

RED STAR Underground Hip

ROOST

SPORTSWORLD ROLLER

STARLITE ROOM

STARLITE ROOM

STARLITE ROOM

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STARLITE ROOM

Hop Night: with DJ Mumps, DJ

THE ROOST Gorgeous

RUM JUNGLE Student Night

SPORTSWORLD ROLLER

VELVET UNDERGROUND

HAVANA CLUB Urban, hip

LEVEL 2 LOUNGE Hypnotiq

O'BYRNE'S DJ Finnegan

ONE ON WHYTE Dancing with

OVERTIME BOILER AND TAP

RED STAR Loaded Friday

THE ROOST Pre-New Years

RUM JUNGLE Peoples DJ

SAPPHIRE RESTAURANT AND

SKATING DISCO Public skate

STANDARD Christmas Edition

STARLITE ROOM Cherry

STONEHOUSE PUB Top 40

TWILIGHT AFTERHOURS

WILD WEST SALOON Billy

ZENARI'S ON 1ST Andrew

ALL SAINTS' ANGLICAN

ARMOURY Fishbone Fridays

AZUCAR LATIN NIGHTCLUB

BACKSTAGE

BAR WILD Bar Wild Fridays

BUDDY'S Dance party with DJ

CALIFORNIA New Year's Eve

DANTE'S BISTRO DJ Johnny

DECADANCE Ladies Night

ESCAPADE Ladies Night

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MUSIC WEEKLY

YOUR GUIDE TO LIVE MUSIC IN EDMONTON

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BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE The

BLUE CHAIR CAFE Ann Vriend

CASINO EDMONTON Colleen

CASINO YELLOWHEAD Derek

COAST TERRACE INN Trocadero

COLONIAL GOLF COURSE C3Metro

COOK COUNTY Craig Moritz

DANTE'S BISTRO Dante's Fire

DELTA EDMONTON SOUTH

ECOLOGUE The James T.

FESTIVAL PLACE The Kit Kat

FOUR ROOMS Marco Clavena

GRINDER The Rault Brothers

JAMMERS PUB Saturday open

JEFFREYS CAFE The Tuxedo

JEKYLL AND HYDE Headwind

KINGSKNIGHT PUB'S Ratpoison

METRO CLUB AND

NEWCASTLE PUB Jerry Jerry

O'BYRNE'S DJ Finnegan

ONE ON WHYTE Tupelo

PALOMINO SALOON Gord

PETROLEUM CLUB Hoffman

RECEPTION 7pm (dinner)

RED'S Trooper April W.

RENDEZVOUS Necronia

ROXY THEATRE A Vaud

SHAW CONFERENCE CENTRE

SIDETRACK CAFE Ch

STARLITE ROOM Sh

START OUT (SO4), D

UNION HALL Connor

URBAN LOUNGE Big

WILD WEST SALOON

CLASSICAL

FANTASY GRILL DINING

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HALO For Those Who Know...
LEVEL 2 LOUNGE Sizzle...
NEW CITY New Years Sucks...
THE ROOST Year of the...
RUM JUNGLE New Years Eve...
SAPPHIRE RESTAURANT AND LOUNGE...
SPORTSWORLD ROLLER SKATING DISCO...
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TWILIGHT AFTERHOURS...
WEDGEWOOD ROOM...
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ROSEBOWL Jam with the...
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DJS
CAJIENTE Urban Ladies Night...
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NEW YORK BAGEL CAFÉ...
SIDETRACK CAFÉ Open stage...
TAPHOUSE Monday Live...
DJS
BAR WILD Bar Gone Wild...
BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE DJ...
BUDDY'S Ashley Love and DJ T

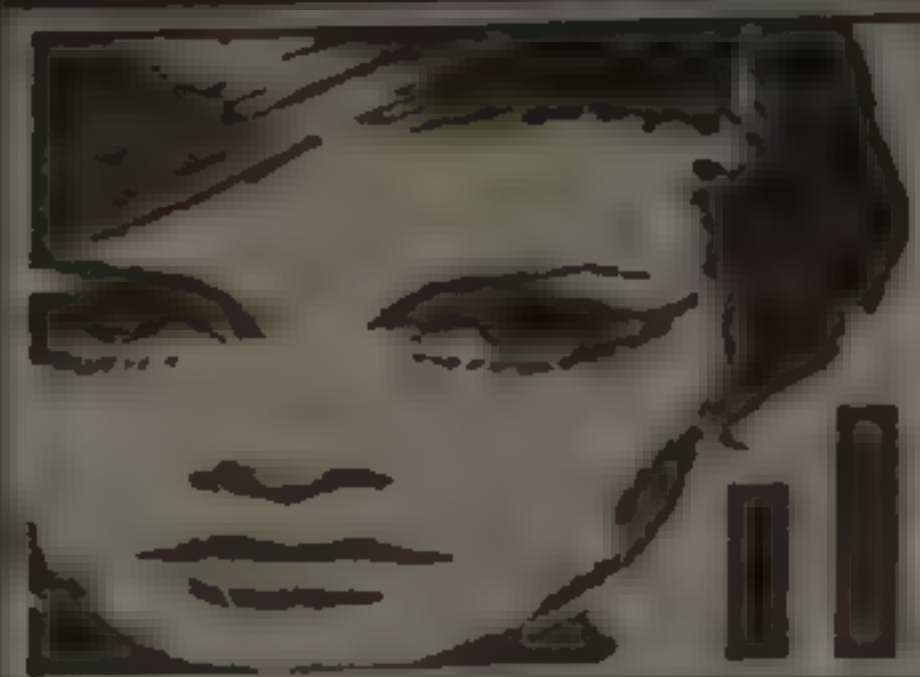
FILTHY MCNASTY'S Metal...
SPORTSWORLD ROLLER SKATING DISCO...
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BLIND PIG PUB AND GRILL...
DRUID (JASPER AVENUE)...
HONEST MUR'S BAR AND GRILL...
JUBILEE AUDITORIUM Rain...
JULIAN'S PIANO BAR...
LEGENDS PUB Open jam...
O'BYRNE'S Celtic night...
SIDETRACK CAFÉ Third Time...
JULIAN'S PIANO BAR...
DJS
BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE...
BUDDY'S Malebox, DJ...
CAJIENTE Bashment Tuesdays...
ESMERALDA'S Top 40...
FILTHY MCNASTY'S Twisted...
GINGUR SKY LOUNGE Juicy...
WILD WEST SALOON Udder

NEW CITY SUBURBS...
NEW CITY LIKWID LOUNGE...
THE ROOST Flamingo Bingo...
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SPORTSWORLD ROLLER SKATING DISCO...
URBAN LOUNGE Salsa and the...
VELVET UNDERGROUND...
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JUBILEE AUDITORIUM Rain...
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BILLIARDS The Metro World...
O'BYRNE'S Chris Wynters...
PLEASANTVIEW HALL...
PLEASANTVIEW HALL...
SIDETRACK CAFÉ Budd...
WILD WEST SALOON Udder

DJS
BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE...
BUDDY'S Gurlz Gone Wild...
GINGUR SKY LOUNGE Electric...
LEGENDS PUB Hip hop/R&B...
RED STAR Funk 'n' Soul...
THE ROOST Amateur Strip...
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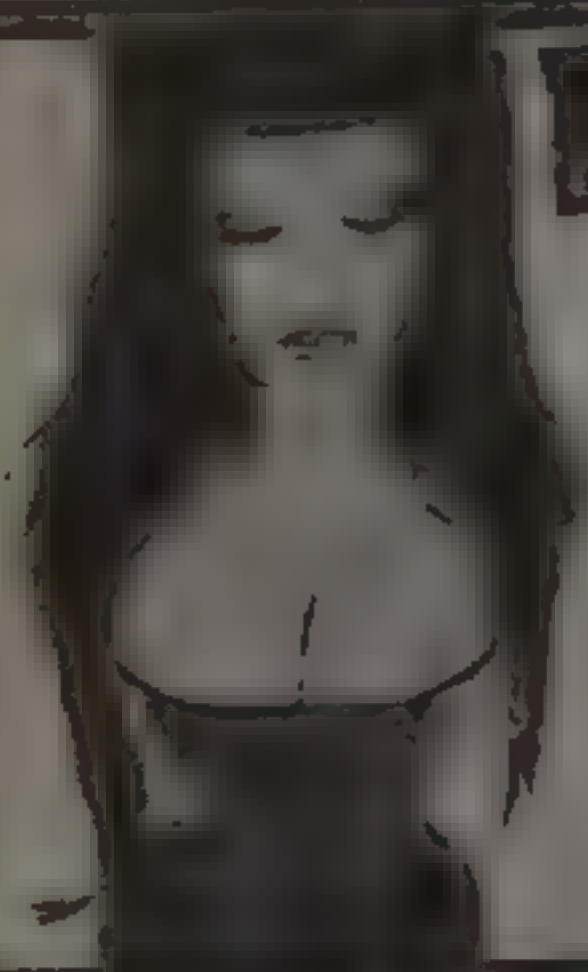
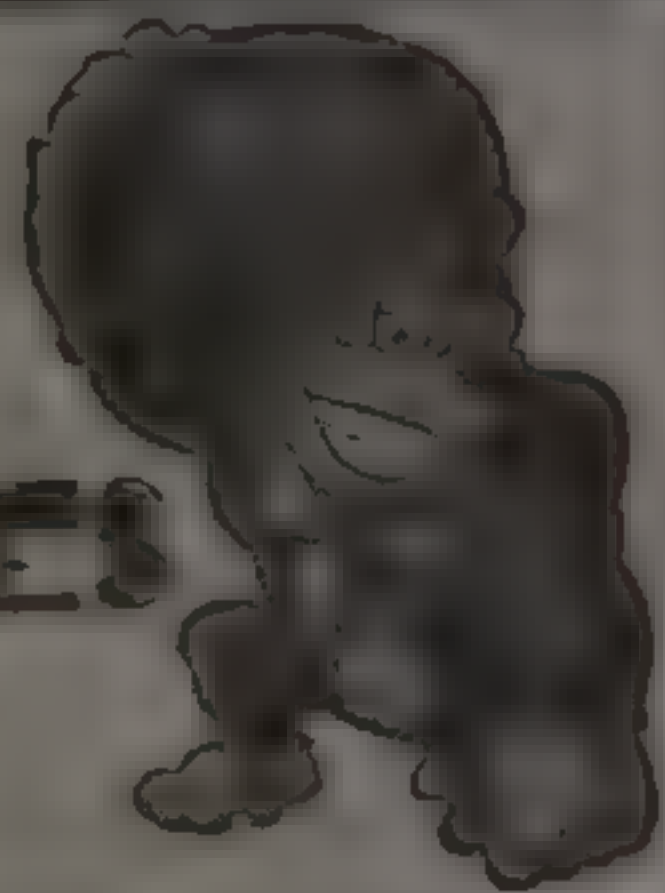
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ALLEGRO 10011-109 St, 424-8888	ALL SAINTS' AMERICAN CATHEDRAL 10035-103 St	ARMOURY 10310-85 Ave, 702-1800	ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL 7704-104 St, 432-4611
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BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE 10425-82 Ave, 439-1082	BLIND PIG PUB AND GRILL 32 St, Anne Street, St. Albert, 418-6332	BLUE CHAIR CAFÉ 9624-76 Ave, 989-2861	BOOTS 10242-106 St, 423-5014
BUDDY'S 117258 Jasper Ave, 488-6636	CAJIENTE 10815 Jasper Ave, 425-0850	CASINO (EDMONTON) Argyll Rd, 463-9467	CASINO (YELLOWHEAD) 12464-153 St, 463-9467
CELLI'S 10338-109 St, 426-	CHRISTOPHER'S PARTY PUB 2021 Millbourne Rd, West, 462-8888	COAST TERRACE INN 4440 Gateway Blvd, 481-6907	COLONIAL GOLF COURSE Beaumont
COOK COUNTY SALOON 8010 Gateway Blvd, 432-2665	DANTE'S BISTRO 17328 Stony Plain Rd, 486-4448	DECADANCE 10018-105 St, 990-1792	DELTA EDMONTON SOUTH HOTEL 4404 Gateway Blvd, 920-4450
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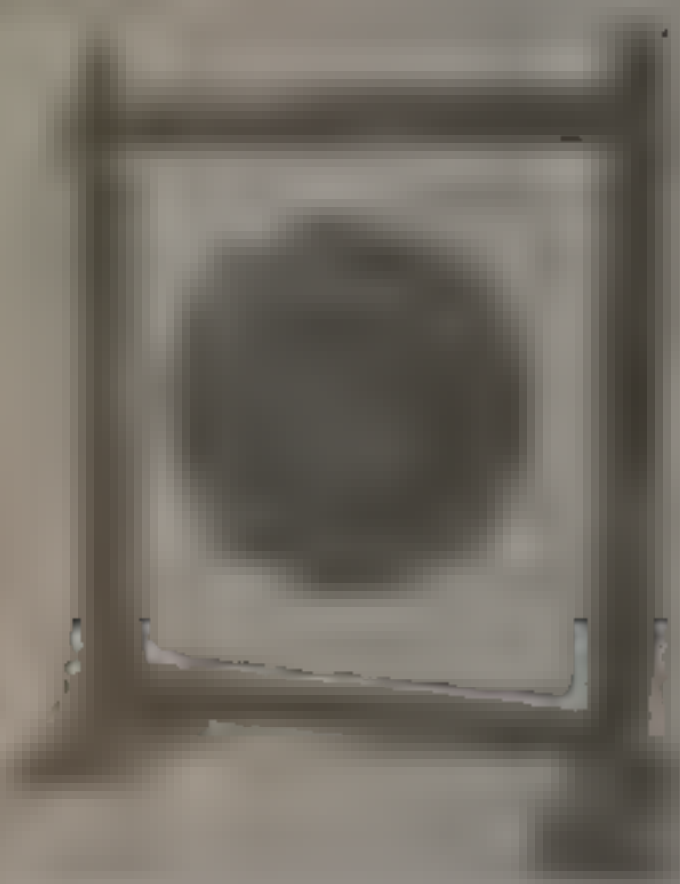
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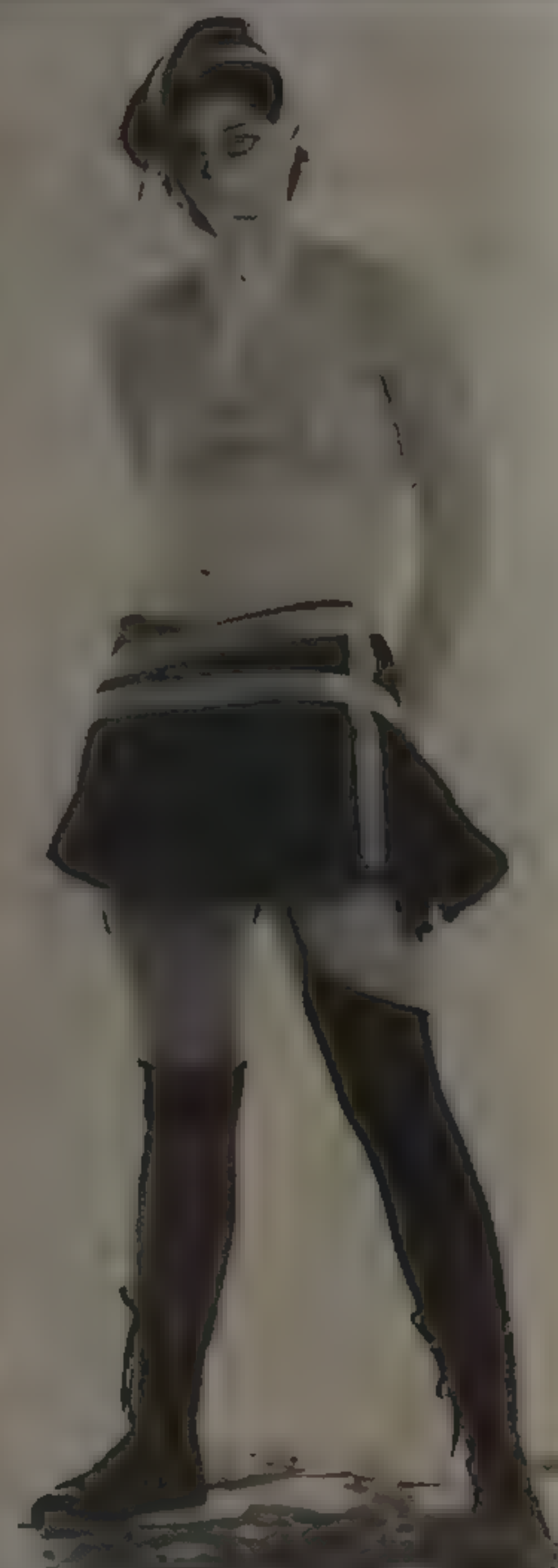
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The Chad

Calgary rocker Chad VanGaalén reminisces about last New Year's celebrations

BY TYSON KABAN

Champagne toasts, fancy dancing, those wonderfully irreverent novelty hats and the inevitable scramble to find someone to kiss at midnight are all supposedly common, if not unavoidable, New Year's traditions. But for anyone who

doesn't live in Dick "I No Longer Have A Soul Or Human Organs That Function On Their Own" Clark's world, the celebration of the New Year rarely lives up to its own glamour or magic. Honestly—do we even have real champagne in Edmonton?

Well, there wasn't any bubbly at

PREVIEW **ROCK**

Chad VanGaalén's last New Year's celebration. The rocker took a decidedly less formal approach to ringing in 2005, sacrificing the stereotypical aspects of the holiday to spend time with some friends back at home in

Calgary which, coincidentally, resulted in one of his most memorable celebrations ever.

"Last year's New Year's Eve was actually pretty good; I biked across the river over to my friend Adam's house and a bunch of other friends that I hadn't seen for a long time had come out from Vancouver, which was a great surprise," he says. "They were pretty wasted already, so we quickly caught up and eventually ended up, literally, sitting inside Adam's car which was inside his garage, just listening to cranked music while under the influence. It sounds pretty lame, but it was so great, hanging out with a bunch of

good friends and, like, tripping out on this weird road-trip without even leaving his garage."

This year, however, VanGaalén will be ushering in 2006 as the headliner for at the Sidetrack Café. Although it regrettably means that he won't be celebrating the occasion in a friend's garage, he's not really concerned with what he'll be missing down south in his hometown. In fact, he would much rather be here in Edmonton most of the time anyway.

"I'm actually really stoked," he says enthusiastically. "I love playing Edmonton; it's my favourite city to play, even more so than Calgary. I love Calgary and stuff, but I've played there so many times that it's basically just me playing with my friends at this point. And it seems like there's less of a cliquy thing going on with Edmonton crowds—like, the indie-rock kids hang out with the hip-hop kids who hang out with the punk-rock kids. They all just go out to see good music."

"Edmonton clearly has a more developed arts community than Calgary," he continues. "And I guess some people think that Calgary is more cultured than Edmonton, but I can tell you that it's not. We probably just pay a lot of people a lot of money to walk around and tell people that."

THE SUPPOSED LACK of culture in Calgary doesn't seem to have affected VanGaalén, who just completed a six-week artist's residence

in Halifax. He's an accomplished animator, who considers his passion for art and music to be one and the same. But he'll also be the first one to tell you that, even with his presence within several artistic communities, he's still out of the loop when it comes to the Canadian music scene.

"I was asked to open for Sarah Slean when she came to Edmonton back in November, but I didn't even know who Sarah Slean was—not that many people do, but I guess she's had a fair bit of success in Canada. So I had no idea what I was getting into there," he explains. "The show was at the Horowitz Theatre and I had to play for this crazy sit-down audience. It was a great venue but I wasn't prepared for it. I felt kind of awkward playing rock 'n' roll music for people who were getting ready to feel inspired."

"I didn't even actually meet her in Edmonton," he continues. "I hooked up with some friends after my spot to play some frisbee and then, after that, I had to drive back down to Calgary to open for her the next day, so it was rushed. I did meet her at the show at the University in Calgary, but only for a couple seconds. She gave me all of the leftover Heinekens from her dressing room, and I was like 'Nice! I don't really have any idea who you are, but I really like you.'" ☐

CHAD VANGAALÉN

With *Field & Stream*, *Hot Little Rocket* and *AA Sound System* • Sidetrack Café • Sat, Dec 31 (8 pm)

The Uncas

Continued from page 26

themselves as one of Edmonton's leading purveyors of a traditional country sound injected with the funk and enthusiasm of rock 'n' roll. And while their stage antics and energetic performances have made them into a staple of the local scene, Futch admits that, despite garnering large audiences during their Canadian tour, alt-country can still be a tough sell.

"It really depends on the market," explains Futch. "If we're playing in a small town, then we're too funky, and if we're playing in a big city, then we're too country. When we go into a new place there are a few people who question us; but most of the audience like to see five guys up on stage doing something

crazy and a little different. It can be an uphill battle."

IN FACT, despite Edmonton's occasional characterization as "Nashville North," Futch sees something distinct in Edmonton that has allowed the Uncas to thrive musically and to successfully grow from a small local band into an act touring across the country.

"There are a lot of alt-country bands in Edmonton, so I think that a lot of people here think that it must be the same everywhere, but it's not. That can be an advantage, though, because we'll go some places where there's no one doing this stuff and people want to see it. I think in Alberta alt-country might be fading because it has been around for so long, but outside it's just catching on."

While it seems that the band

has done enough work to exhaust the momentum built from their albums and tours, 2005 looks to be leading into an even more eventful 2006. With the band gaining attention from labels ("We're really happy being DIY," says Futch) and having mastered the art of the cross-country trek, the Uncas will more than likely have no reason to be singing country blues for at least another year.

"We already have a whole slew of new songs ready to go, but you can't really have a non-stop onslaught of albums," laughs Futch. "We'll continue touring and working on our songs, and then start recording the new album to come out in 2006. We're basically just waiting in the wings—we can't release an album every three months." ☐

THE UNCAS

Black Dog Freehouse • Sat, Dec 31 (9 pm)





Hungary heart

Hungarian-Canadian producer Attila Glatz brings his Salute to Vienna to Edmonton this New Year's Day

BY SARAH CHAN

After a big night of New Year's Eve partying, Edmonton classical music fans will have the chance to unwind with the **Salute To Vienna** troupe, who will be prepared to help listeners relax and recover with a show filled with spectacular Viennese music and dancing. This 70-year-old Hungarian tradition has been recreated in North America by Attila Glatz Concert Productions, currently dazzling audi-

ences in thirty-three cities.

Producer Attila Glatz grew up with the original Viennese tradition of the New Year's Day concert and describes how it is now becoming a tradition here in North America. "People actually love meeting at the concert—they haven't seen each other for a year and this is where they meet," says Glatz. "A lot of families with kids love it because they don't get bored. Not here! There's always something happening and the conductor always talks between the numbers about the music."

Nine years ago, the first Salute to Vienna concert in Toronto hosted 1,000 people and the enthusiastic

response resulted in another set of concerts the following year in Toronto and New York, both sellouts. Since then, the expansion of the production has continued, and there are now several performances, many of them simultaneous, all across Canada and the U.S. within the period of about six days.

THE FEEL-GOOD ASPECT of these Viennese-inspired concerts is in the cheerful and elegant roots of Johann Strauss Junior's music. "It's a very enjoyable afternoon with a lot of waltzes and polkas, so it's a very frolic event," Glatz enthuses. "We've got dancers and singers and the conductor from Vienna who is very friendly to the people. It's a very uplifting concert."

These musicians, vocal soloists and dancers number around 75 per performance and are hand picked by Glatz and his wife each year when they return to Vienna to scout for talent. "We rotate the artists around," Glatz explains. "If they prove themselves to be good then we are using them for many years. Sometimes we want to put the artists to rest for a couple of years, but basically the good ones we try to rotate

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but we never repeat." of the main differences between the original production and the series is that the music and happen on the stage and are as a whole, whereas the tele-Viennese version has the acts off at another location, going to music that is piped in. The televised version goes back and forth between the music and acting, contrary to the simultane-

ous interplay at these live North American performances.

Above all, these concerts are a labour of love, and Glatz is truly passionate about his creation. "I really do get the satisfaction of the concerts," he reflects. "I see what we produce, I sit there with my wife, hand in hand, and we get teary-eyed with those people around us, so happy." This passionate, happy feeling is obviously infectious; the Salute to Vienna concerts have been wildly successful, and

Edmonton also has the pleasure of participating this New Year's Day.

"We want people to relax and enjoy themselves," Glatz says, "and we are delighted to give them this beautiful time." Let the New Year's celebrations continue with a spectacular, uplifting yet relaxing visit to Vienna, right here in Edmonton."

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NEW SOUNDS

VARIOUS ARTISTS
FOR A DECADE OF SIN: 11 YEARS OF BLOODSHOT RECORDS (BLOODSHOT)

Eleven years after releasing their first album, Bloodshot Records is celebrating with a sprawling, two-disc set. For a *Decade of Sin* isn't just some easy look back at previously released material, though; the 42 songs featured here are all seeing the light for the first time, making this a little more interesting than some greatest-hits collection. The coolest thing about a set like this is that it offers a lot of these artists the freedom to have a little fun with the music. They don't have to worry about making a bunch of songs work together; they just do their thing and call it done. In some cases, the musicians have chosen cover songs that they might not have bothered with otherwise, and, while none are truly bad, there are varying levels of success. Bobby Bare Jr. offers up a shuffling version of Jane's Addiction's "Ocean Size" that is well worth hearing,

and Porter Hall TN kick in a wicked, raging country-punk attack on Jim Carroll's "People Who Died," while the normally awesome Yayhoos turn in a fun but ultimately forgettable take on the O'Jays' "Love Train."

But there's a lot more to this album than just cover songs, and some of the best tracks turn out to be original contributions. Scott H. Biram's "Blood Sweat & Murder" is stompin' alt-country with some dirty distortion and an evil voice, while Muerto's "Josephine" paints a dark canvas with just guitar, bass and harmonica, and Blanche delivers a sad, acoustic tale of love (with a tinge of morbid humour) in "Red Head."

Some of the originals do suffer from the same problem as the covers: they just don't hold enough weight to make them stand out. Matt Mays & El Torpedo's "The Plan" sounds like anything off of their album, and "Juke Joint Jumping" by Wayne Hancock and Hank Williams III is pretty much a throwaway. But again, there's nothing that's not worth hearing at least once. The only real trouble with *A Decade of Sin* is that

it leaves you itching to hear more than a single song from most of the contributors. ★★ ★★ —EDEN MUNRO

FILTHY THIEVING BASTARDS
MY PAPPY WAS A PISTOL (BYO RECORDS)

Filthy and thieving they may be, but copycats they are not. Sure, it's clear the Filthy Thieving Bastards are inspired by the Pogues' blend of roots and punk rock, and lead singer Johnny Bonnel has a husky voice and raw singing style reminiscent of Shane McGowan's, but the Bastards have a nonetheless created a poetic and musical atmosphere distinctly their own.

Their newest album is well focused thematically, delving into the dark world of alcohol abuse, drug abuse, and pretty much almost any other kind of abuse you can think of. The lyrics, amazingly articulate for a punk band, abound with clever storytelling and vivid psychological portraits. The album's only weakness is that sometimes the lyrics take precedence over the music, resulting in strange incongruity. A couple of the slower tracks like "Neverkind" and "Sealed Confessions" sound as if the harmony was painstakingly composed to constitute a suitably weird background for the weird lyrics. Luckily, the rest of the songs seem to have been written with an off-the-cuff sort of freedom, most likely over a pint or two. The result is a collection of very catchy songs with some good old-fashioned Celtic and country cadences driven by an energetic punk beat. ★★ ★★ —SONYA SOLO

SAINT ETIENNE
TALES FROM TURNPIKE HOUSE (SAVOY JAZZ)

After 15 years together, you'd expect band to pop out a greatest hits compilation, a concert DVD, or some of the predictable repackage just in time for the holidays. But Saint Etienne apparently aren't ones for predictable with *Tales from Turnpike House* they released something unexpected for band at the 15-year mark, though perhaps no less innocuous than a "number ones" collection: a concept album.

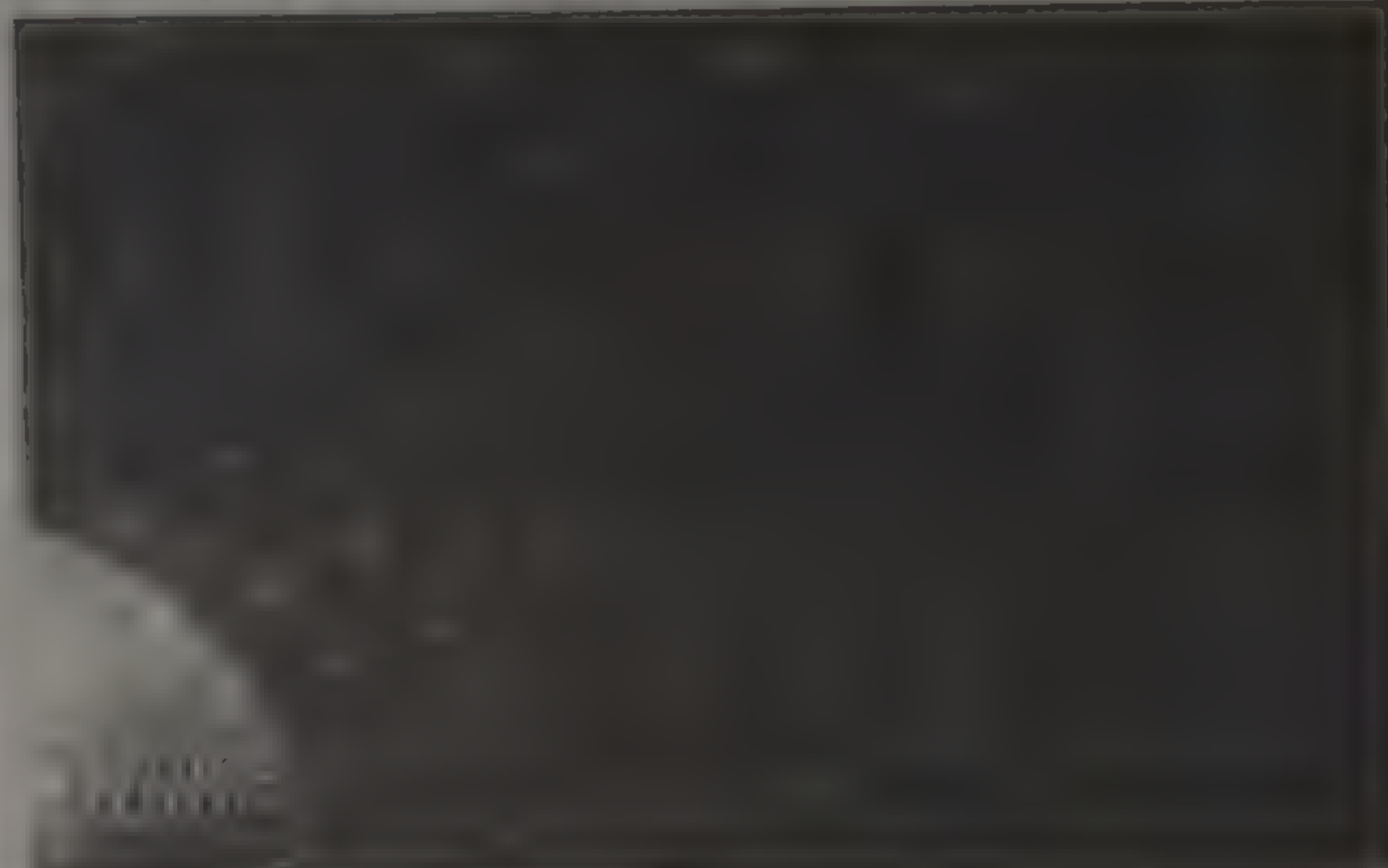
The record is sort of a latter-day *Village Green Preservation Society* ode to suburbia and everyday mundanity. Songs about blissfully ignoring crime rates ("Side Streets") and preparing cornflakes and tea ("The Bottle Symphony") are set to sweet melodies charming and muted enough so as not to disturb the neighbours. Even the likely single "Stay Above Us" is characteristically bland—it's disco-catchy, but in a style more suiting the A-Teens than Annie. What stands out is a Pulp-like power observation, especially on "Teen Winter," where Sarah Cracknell adorns her little-girl vocals to monotone in a weary whisper. It's a much-needed respite from the muzak, giving an unexpected poignancy to more about painfully ordinary people.

There's no doubt the ordinary loungey pop that makes up most of *Tales* matches the ordinary-people theme. But even contented suburban apartment dwellers get tired of elevator music. ★★ ★ —LEAH COULSON

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STEVE REYNOLDS
EXILE
(429)

Steve Reynolds sings with a relaxed local style and plays pleasant, folkie acoustic guitar. Trouble is, that's all we've heard before, and his songs aren't breaking that antiquated mould. Throughout the dragging tempo of the 12 tunes on *Exile*, Reynolds works hard at being the moody, serious guy with a guitar, but it's not very convincing. Oh, sure, he's pretty decent at finger-picking, but that doesn't make him an original by any stretch. "Dear Rose" starts fine, but quickly degenerates into a bland chorus that shoots for epic, misses, and never recovers.

Exile is so full of uninspired background music that it's practically offensive in its inability to challenge the listener on any level. There's not much to discover after the first listen, and that's generally the problem here, with one exception: the title track turns out to be remarkable, where Reynolds provides a steady acoustic groove over which his collaborators weave a host of sounds (lap steel, mandolin, electric guitar, and more) that make the album into an experience worth having. Unfortunately, "Exile" is the last song on the disc and reaching it is something like crawling through a hundred miles of scorching hot desert: a parched mouth, sand in the eyes, and nothing but miles and miles of the same old thing—except that might be more fun. ★★ —EDEN MUNRO



distant replay

By STEVEN SANDOR

THIS WEEK: Darren Labrentz discusses U2's *The Joshua Tree*

There really are two types of local bands: the kind that plays locally over and over, slowly building a fanbase until it's strong enough to play in other markets, and the kind that is unafraid to get its name and music out to as many as people as possible as soon as possible. Ellis definitely falls into the latter category. The Edmonton act has already brought its British-influenced pop-rock sound to Vancouver, as it got the chance to record a demo at Nickelback lead-man Chad Kroeger's studio. And the man behind the board for those sessions was none other than regular Nickelback producer Joey Moi.

There's no doubt that singer Darren Labrentz and the rest of the Ellis crew are unafraid to show off their tunes. But where did Labrentz get his burning desire to be a rock 'n' roll frontman? He says that he first got the bug when he saw Irish über-rockers U2 play on the American Music Awards; after that, he was hooked on *The Joshua Tree*, the 1990 album that transformed the band from '80s co-kings of the rock underground (a mantle they shared with REM) to arguably the biggest rock act of the 1990s.

The Joshua Tree was successful because it saw U2 successfully straddle the line between the political con-

sciousness that marked critically acclaimed albums like *War* and *Boy* with simple, soulful rockers that connected with the public at large. It was an album that found room to contain "Bullet the Blue Sky," an angry rant at American foreign policy in Latin America, as well as personal, emotional songs such as "I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For" and "With or Without You."

What struck Labrentz was how the album was so filled with raw emotion without ever feeling forced. "It was the first album that I heard that was all about the emotion," he says. "It wasn't about the song structure or the pop hooks. It was totally about conveying emotion to the listener, from the Edge's guitar to the lyrics of Bono."

And while *The Joshua Tree* was filled



with hits, Labrentz doesn't believe that's what the Edge, Bono and company had in mind when they went into the studio. "I don't think they ever consciously aimed the record to be the one that would put them over the top," he says. "But the music was so successful in connecting with listeners, it ended up being the one that put them on the world stage."

Oh, and he still finds time to revisit *The Joshua Tree* every now and then. "I still pop it in at least once a month," says Labrentz. "But when I first got it, I was listening to it religiously." ☺

haiku QUICK SPINS

BY WHITEY
AND T.B. PLAYER

Well, the fine people at Sony/BMG really wanted your Christmas gifts to go towards some of the Eurythmics back catalogue this season, so we're releasing all the band's albums and a best-of just so you wouldn't forget old Annie and... uh... that other guy with the beard. To celebrate, we thought we'd summate all our years of hard work into a hand-digged, easily digestible toss-off mix in our all-Eurythmics Quick Spins. Enjoy!

Eurythmics

The Garden (1981)

No monster hits here

This ethereal debut

shows where they're going

Eurythmics

Sweet Dreams (Are Made of This) (1983)

This tape was playing
The very first time I got
My wiener touched! Whooo!

Eurythmics

Touch (1983)

Ahhh.. Here comes the rain..
There are more songs on this disc
They're known as "filler"

Eurythmics

Be Yourself Tonight (1985)

With Aretha's help,
David and Annie get all
Motown on your ass

Eurythmics

Revenge (1986)

Their "bad-ass" album;
As threatening as puppies
In a burlap sack

Eurythmics

Savage (1987)

Schmaltzy electro
Okay for '87
Now cheesy and weak

Eurythmics

We Too Are One (1989)

Writing's on the wall!
Maybe should have been titled
We Two are Done! Ha!

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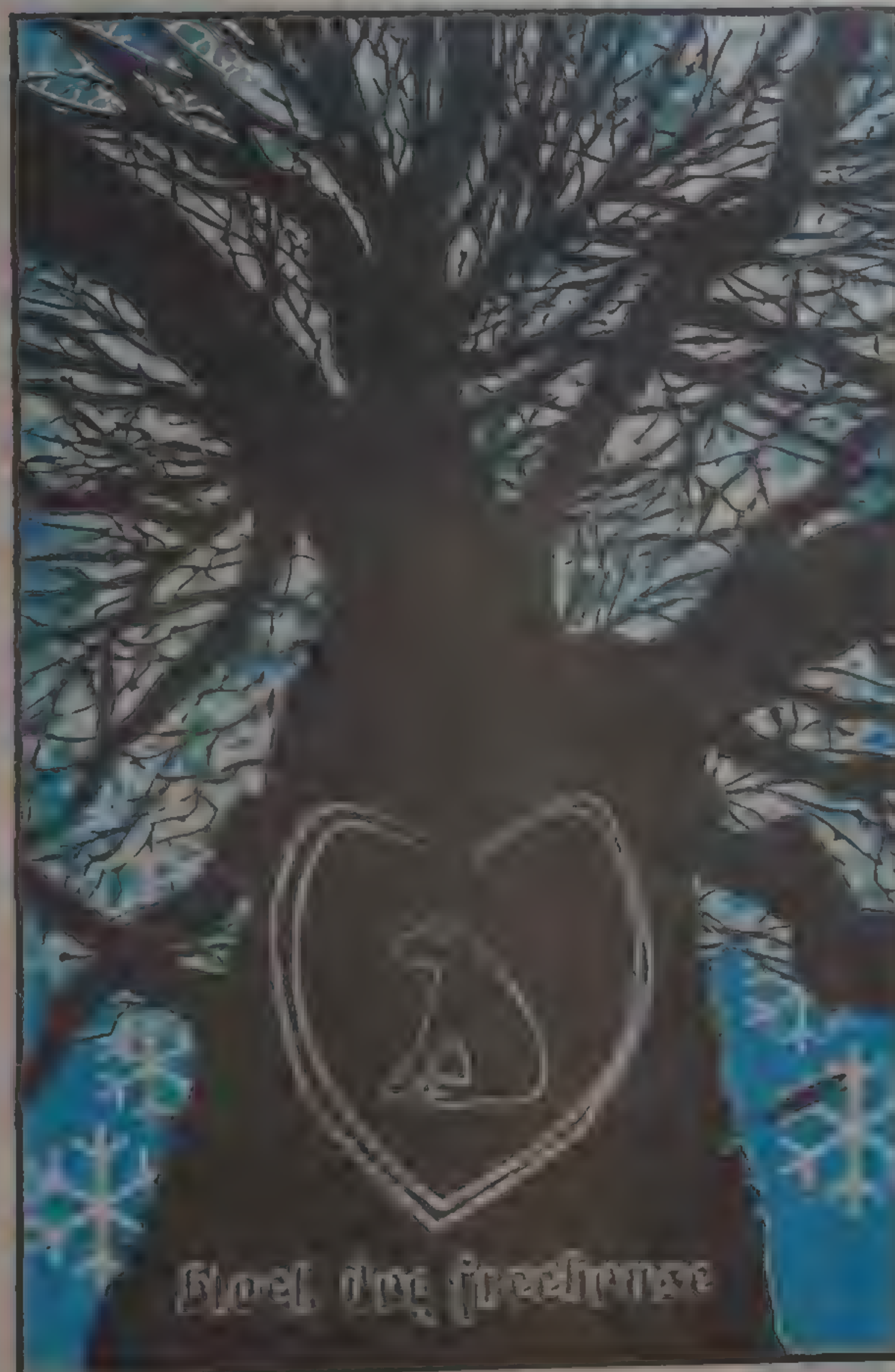
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GALLERIES/MUSEUMS

ART BEAT GALLERY 26 St. Anne Street St. Albert (459-3679) • Open Tue, Wed, Fri 10am-6pm; Thu 10am-8pm; Sat 10am-5pm • *IN CHARACTER...: Artworks by Yardley Jones; until Dec. 31* • Watercolours by Jim Brager and Gregg Johnson, artworks by Art Beat's new artist Karoli Dayce Brinton, wood works by Richard Goerg and Mason Eyben • December-January

ART GALLERY OF ALBERTA (EDMONTON ART GALLERY) 2 Sir Winston Churchill Sq (422-6223) • Open Tue-Wed and Fri 10:30am-5pm; Thu 10:30am-8pm; Sat, Sun 11am-5pm; closed Mon • Open Dec. 31 (11am-5pm); closed for New Year's Day, and Jan. 2; open Jan. 7 (1-4pm) • *EDWARD BURTYNSKY; until Feb. 26* • *ITUKIAGATTA: Inuit sculpture from the TD Bank Financial Group collection; until Feb. 26* • *EXPERIENCE A WORLD OF WONDER IN INUIT ART: Work on soap-carving, printmaking, and appliqué projects; until Dec. 30 (1-3pm)* • Jan. 8 (1-4pm) • *NATURAL PHILOSOPHY: until Jan. 8* • *THE SEASONS OF PRAIRIE LIFE: William Kurelek; until Jan. 8* • *FRENCH DRAWINGS: From the National Gallery of Canada collection; until Jan. 8* • *WILLIAM EDDINS: Collection Selection* • *Kitchen Gallery: INUIT ART: A MOVING EXPERIENCE: Travel and transport in the Arctic; until Feb. 26* • *Gallery Tours: Weekends: 12:30, 1:30, 2:30, 3:30pm* • *Children's Gallery: TIR-NA-NOG (FOREVER YOUNG): By Spider Yardley-Jones • \$9 (adult)/\$6 (student/senior)/\$3 (child 6-12)/free (member/child 5 and under)*

ART MODE GALLERY 12220 Jasper Ave (453-1555) • Open Tue-Sun • Artworks by Jennifer Mack, Maya Eventov, Eric Waugh, Denise Lefebvre, Pei Yang, Irina Koulikov, and Emilija Pasagic • Through December

ARTSHAB STUDIO GALLERY 10217-106 St. 3rd Fl (439-9532/429-2024) • Open every Thu • *365 DAYS AGO: Artworks by various artists created over the last 365 days • Every Thu until Dec. 29*

BEARCLAW GALLERY 10403-124 St (482-1204) • Artworks by Norval Morrisseau, Daphne Odjig, Roy Thomas, Jane Ash Poitras, George Littlechild, Joane Cardinal-Schubert, Jim Logan, Maxine Noel, Aaron Paquette and others

BRINSMEAD ZIOLA KENNEDY ARCHITECTURE 10434-122 St • Open: Mon-Fri 8am-5pm • *ROOTS: Paintings by Jodi Tychkowsky • Until Jan. 2*

BRUCE PEEL SPECIAL COLLECTIONS LIBRARY 8-Rutherford South, U of A Campus (492-5998) • Open: Mon-Fri 10am-4:30pm • *LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS: Featuring photographs, archival documents, and important works from Alexander Cameron Rutherford's book collection • Through December*

CHRISTL BERGSTROM'S RED GALLERY 9621-82 Ave (439-8210) • Open Mon-Fri 11am-5pm • *ALBERTA LANDSCAPES-THE HUMAN TOUCH: Paintings by Christl Bergstrom • Until Feb. 28*

EXTENSION CENTRE GALLERY 2nd Fl, University Extension Centre, 8303-112 St (492-0166) • Open: Mon-Thu (8:30am-8pm), Fri (8:30am-4:30pm), Sat (9am-noon) • Laura Evans Reid, an early student of Henry Glyde; until Jan. 4 • *DRAWINGS: By Ihor Dmytruk; Jan. 9-Feb. 1*

FRINGE GALLERY 10516 Whyte Ave (432-0240) • Artworks by Madeline Jones • Through January

HARCOURT HOUSE 10215-112 St (426-4180) • Open Mon-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 12-4pm • *MEL-*

LIUFLUOUS: Vancouver installation artist Helena Wadsley; Jan. 6-Feb. 4 • **Front Room: BETTER-STILL: Kris Lindskoog; Jan. 6-Feb. 4**

JEFF ALLEN GALLERY Strathcona Place, 10831 University Ave (433-5282) • *PAST EXHIBITORS SHOW: Artworks by former Alberta gallery exhibitors • Jan. 11-Feb. 2* • Gallery Art Walk at Strathcona Place Senior Centre: Wed, Jan. 11

JOHNSON GALLERY (SOUTH) 7711-85 St (465-6171) • Open Mon-Fri 9am-5pm; Sat 10am-5pm • *CHRISTMAS EXTRAVAGANZA: Paintings and prints by gallery artists and visiting artists. Pottery by local potters and art cards • Through December*

JOHNSON GALLERY (NORTH) 11817-80 St (479-8424) • Open Tue-Fri 9:30am-5:30pm; Sat 9:30am-4pm • Artworks by Myles MacDonald, Waltraut Unbekannt-Lafleur, and Dave Ripley. Giclee reproductions of prints by Len Gibbs, Raymond Chow, Dorothy Oxborough, Ted Hesketh • Through December

LANDO GALLERY 11130-105 Ave (990 1161) • *SONG OF SONGS: Paintings by Tslila Barzel*

McMULLEN GALLERY U of A Hospital, 8440-112 St (407-7152) • Open Mon-Fri 10am-8pm; Sat-Sun 1-8pm • *FIVE DEFINITIONS OF SPIRIT: Artworks by Allison Argy-Burgess, Roger Belley, Sharon Moore-Foster, Teresa Halkow with musical composition by John Caverly, curated by Robert Sinclair • Until Jan. 29*

MCPAG 5411-51 St, Stony Plain (963-2777) • Open Mon-Sat 10am-4pm; Sun 10am-6:30pm • Drawings and paintings by Michael Mott • Until Jan. 12

MILNER ART GALLERY Theatre Foyer Gallery, Stanley A. Milner Library, 7 Sir Winston Churchill Sq (496-7000) • *DRAWING THE REMARKABLE MARIA: CRAYONS ACROSS THE AMERICAS: Artworks by Tara Langlois and Patti McIntosh • Until Jan. 2*

MUDDY WATERS CAFÉ 8211-111 St (966-8612) • Artworks by Rebecca Schroder • Until Jan. 28

MUSÉE HÉRITAGE MUSEUM 5 St. Anne Street, St. Albert (459-1528) • Open: Mon-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 1-5pm • *SCOUTING FOR INDIANS: Photographs by Jeffrey Thomas • Until Feb. 26*

NINA HAGGERTY CENTRE FOR THE ARTS Stollery Gallery, 9702-111 Ave (474-7611) • Open Mon-Fri 10am-2:30pm, Tue 6:30-8:30pm, Thu 6-8pm • *OFFERINGS FROM THE THIRD DIMENSION: Experimental work in clay; until Dec. 30* • Artworks drawn from life in the Sudan and Cairo, by Emmanuel Bara Matiya; Jan. 9-Feb. 10; opening reception: Jan. 12 (4-8pm)

PROFILES PUBLIC ART GALLERY 19 Perron Street, St. Albert (460-4310) • Open: Tue-Sat (10am-5pm), Thu (10am-8pm) • *PRESENCE: St. Albert Place Visual Arts Council (SAPVAC); until Dec. 31* • *IN SEQUENCE: Artworks by Joseph Anderson Terry Reynoldson, Kelly Johnner and Michael Coolidge; Jan. 12-Mar. 3; opening reception: Thu, Jan. 12 (7-9pm), musical entertainment by Visionary Talent Inc.*

REYNOLDS-ALBERTA MUSEUM 2km W of Wetaskiwin, Hwy 13 (780-361-1351/1-800-661-4726) • Open: Tue-Sun 10am-5pm • *THE LAST TIMES OF THE MOTORCYCLE: Until Sept. 17, 2006 • \$9 (adult)/\$7 (youth)/\$5 (child)/free (child six and under)*

ROYAL ALBERTA MUSEUM 12845-102 Ave (453-9100) • Open Mon-Sun 9am-5pm • *KID STUFF: A nostalgic look at dozens of classic toys from the '50s and '60s; until Jan. 9* • *QUEENS OF THE COURT: THE EDMONTON GRADS; until Feb. 12*

SNAP GALLERY 10309-97 St (423-1492) • Open Tue-Sat 12-5pm • *AND NOW, THEN OTHERWISE: Printworks suggesting the idea of time and temporal release by Toronto artist David Armstrong; Jan. 5-Feb. 18; reception, artist in attendance: Thu, Feb. 16 (7-9pm)*

STUDIO GALLERY 143 Grandin Park Plaza, St. Albert (460-5990) • Open: Tue-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 10am-4pm • *WET PAINT: Artworks by various artists • Until Dec. 31*

URBAN ROOTS 10143 Whyte Ave (438-5978) • Paintings/photographs by Peca Rajkovic. Sculpture and masks by Ritchie Velthuis. Paintings and cast bronze by Tania Garner-Tomas • Until Dec. 31

VAAA GALLERY 3rd Fl, Harcourt House, 10215-112 St (421-1731) • Open Tue-Sat 10am-5:30pm • *IMPRESSIONS: Paintings by Bernie Hippel and photographs by Robert Michiel • Jan. 5-Feb. 4 • Opening reception: Thu, Jan. 5 (7-9:30pm)*

VANDERLEELIE GALLERY 10183-112 St (452-0286) • Open Tue-Sat 10am-5:30pm •

Classical figure and still life paintings by Lam Photographs of flowers by Anderson

LITERARY

CBC CENTRE STAGE CBC's Broadcast Centre, City Centre Mall • CBC Radio's Poetry Face-Off Five poets will be chosen by a panel of CBC judges and commissioned and paid to write and perform an original piece on this year's theme "Irresistible", bring your best work that's suitable for a radio audience • Wed, Jan. 4

GREENWOODS' BOOKSHOPPE 7925-104 St (439-2005) • George R.R. Martin will be reading from his new novel *A Feast For Crows* • Wed, Jan. 11 (7pm)

NAKED CYBER CAFÉ 10354 Jasper Ave • Music, poetry, and performance art open stage hosted by the Naked Eclectic Electric Orchestra • Every Thu (8pm)

LIVE COMEDY

THE COMEDY FACTORY 3414 Gateway Boulevard (469-4999) • Thu 8:30pm, Fri 8:30pm, Sat 8pm and 10:30pm • Rick Reed, Dec. 29-31 • New Year's Party: Featuring Rick Reed, everyman's comedian, a blend of zaniness and homespun storytelling • Marty Hanenberg; Jan. 6-7

THE COMIC STRIP 1646 Bourbon St, WEM, 8882-170 St (483-5999) • Show times nightly at 8pm; weekends 8pm and 10:30pm • Ron Vaudry, Nigel Lawrence, Rick Bronson; Dec. 29-30 • New Year's Extravaganza: Featuring Ron Vaudry (*Just for Laughs*), Nigel Lawrence, and Rick Bronson; 7pm (buffet/show, and show only tickets); 10pm (show, incl. champagne party favours, prizes, midnight lunch, party to follow show); \$55.59 (7pm show: package 1 buffet and show)/\$30 (7pm show: package 2 show only)/\$65 (10pm show: package 3: complementary glass of champagne, extended show, party favours, midnight cold buffet, post show dance party) • Get Hypnotized: with Sheldon Fingler; Tue, Jan. 3 • B.O.I. (Best of Improv): Featuring Edmonton's improvising teams with the Fresh Faces of Stand-Up; Wed, Jan. 4 • Ron Vaudry (*Just for Laughs*) with Vince Fluke, and Daryl Makk; Jan. 5-8 • Get Hypnotized: with Sebastian Steele; Tue, Jan. 10 • B.O.I. (Best of Improv): Featuring Edmonton's improvising teams with the Fresh Faces of Stand-Up; Wed, Jan. 11

YUK YUK'S KOMEDY KABARET Londonderry Mall (481-9857) • Thu/Sat 8pm, Fri 8pm and 10:30pm • Every Wed: Pro AM comedy jam • Kenny Valgardson, Kendal Gawryluk/Howie Miller and Kevin McGrath; Dec. 28-30 • Get "Grose" This New Year's Eve: Laugh with Edmonton's Andrew Grose, Paul Sveen and Howie Miller; \$75 (buffet dinner and show)/\$40 (show only) • Complimentary admission through December: Wed/Thu 8pm, and Fri/Sat 10:30pm to anyone who makes a donation to the Edmonton Food Bank • Johnny 'Bagpipes' Johnston's fundraising event: Wed, Jan. 25 and Thu, Jan. 26; proceeds go to an elementary school in South Africa

THEATRE

CANADIAN GRAFFITI Jubilations Dinner Theatre, WEM, Phase III, Upper Level, 22253 8882-170 St (484-2424) • Until Jan. 21

DIE-NASTY Varscona Theatre 10329-83 Ave (433-3399) • Directed by Dana Andersen. Intrigue, passion and shenanigans abound in Edmonton's live improvised soap opera • Every Mon (8pm) • Tickets at the door

THE GLASS MENAGERIE Catalyst Theatre, 8529 Gateway Boulevard (431-1750) • Kill Your TV Theatre presents Tennessee Williams' *The Glass Menagerie*, directed by Kevin Sutley and stars Nathan Cuckow, Beth Graham, Chris Bullough and Marianne Copithorne • Jan. 5-21 (8pm), Saturdays (2pm and 8pm) • \$16/\$12 • Free preview: Jan. 4; Two-For-One-Tues: Jan. 10 and 17; opening night gala: \$20 • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

THE GOLDEN AGE OF ROCK, POP AND DOO WOP Mayfield Dinner Theatre, Mayfield Inn, 16615-109 Ave (483-4051) • Until Feb. 12

MY FAIR LADY Festival Place, 100 Festival Way, Sherwood Park (449-3378/451-8000) • Musical, adapted from Bernard Shaw's play *Pygmalion*. Henry Higgins, an opinionated linguistics professor and confirmed bachelor, makes a wager that he can transform Eliza Doolittle, a cockney flower girl into a high society lady • Until Dec. 30 (7:30pm) • \$24 (show only adult)/\$15 (show only children 12 and under)

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1. The Co-Dependants - Live At The Mecca Café Vol.2 (indelible)
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3. Harry Manx - Mantras For Madmen (dog my cat)
4. Sarah Harmer - I'm A Mountain (cold snap)
5. Bruce Cockburn - Speechless (true north)
6. Wilco - Kicking Television (nonesuch)
7. Paul Kelly - Foggy Highway (true north)
8. Metric - Live It Out (last gang)
9. Corb Lund-Hair in my eyes like a Highland Steer (stony plain)
10. Betty Lavette - I've Got My Own Hell To Raise (anti)
11. Colin James - Limelight (maple)
12. System Of A Down - Hypnotize (american)
13. Broken Social Scene - Broken Social Scene (arts&crafts)
14. Twin Fangs - Street Sweeper (rectangle)
15. Cam Penner & The Gravel Road - Felt Like A Sunday Night (cp)
16. Faunts - High Expectations/Low Results (friendly fire)
17. Kane Bush - Aerial (anti)
18. Ann Vriend - Modes Of Transport (av)
19. Calexico/Iron & Wine - In The Reins (overcoat)
20. Sufjan Stevens - Illinoise (asthmatic kitty)
21. The New Pornographers-Twin Cinema (mint)
22. Death From Above 1979 - Romance Bloody Romance Remixes & B-Sides (last gang)
23. Rammstein - Rosenrot (universal)
24. Marah - If You Didn't Laugh, You'd Cry (yep roc)
25. The Vertical Struts - S/T (popecho)
26. Broken Nose - Goodbye Prudence (bn)
27. Danger Doom - The Mouse & The Mask (epitaph)
28. Wolf Parade - Apologies To The Queen Mary (sub pop)
29. Neil Young - Prairie Wind (warner)
30. Rodney Crowell-The Outsider (columbia)

ALL TOMORROW'S PARTIES: PACIFIC 2003 - VARIOUS

ATP's latest compilation, curated by The Simpsons/Futurama/Life in Hell-creator, Matt Groening. Featuring performers from the Groening-curated 2003 All Tomorrow's Parties festival, this release is a reflection of the artist's passion and dedication to music, as well as a tribute to his past history as a music critic for the LA Reader. This compilation features regular album tracks, as well as some rarities, including an unreleased Jackie-O Motherfucker track, and Sonic Youth's cover of The Simpsons theme, previously available only on the 1996 compilation Go Simpsonic With The Simpsons.

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Flower power

The blossoms in Tslila Barzel's *Song of Songs* represent the people in the artist's life

BY AGNIESZKA MATEJKO

*...us go out early to the vineyards,
...see whether the vines have budded,
...whether the grape blossoms have opened
...the pomegranates are in bloom.
...I will give you my love.
...Song of Solomon 7:12*

Whenever I mention to my friends and students that one of the most beautiful, erotic and sensuous love poems in the world can be found in the Bible, they all look at me with wide eyes. It seems that not too many people know about this treasure. The *Song of Songs* (or the *Song of Solomon*) is not widely read during services. Perhaps, as hard as priests and ministers have tried to turn it into a spiritual metaphor, the sensual content remains far too luscious for a Sunday sermon; this poem could turn the thoughts of the con-

gregation to romance faster than a glass of wine. However, even if churches don't give this literary masterpiece much prominence, it has deeply influenced art over the centuries. In fact, many artists have fallen under its spell for a lifetime, and this is exactly what happened to Tslila Barzel, the artist behind the *Song of Songs* series of paintings (selections from this series are now featured at the Lando Gallery).

Barzel was practically born with

VISUAL ARTS

the *Song of Songs* in her blood. "It was a part of my youth," explains Barzel, who grew up in Israel surrounded by her parent's large collection of Bibles (their passion almost prophesied in their family name "Ranel," meaning "songs of God"). As a child she remembers how much she loved dancing to the lines of the *Song of Songs*. When she reached her 12th birthday, the Bat Mitzvah ceremony marked her entry into adulthood, and on that day, she received her very own copy of the *Song of Songs*. "I didn't really understand it then," she recalls. It wasn't until Barzel became a teenager and fell in love for the first time that she

turned to her book with new understanding. "I got another one with beautiful illustrations on my wedding day," continues Barzel, and she explains how each reading at each new stage in life causes her understanding of this enigmatic love poem to grow and deepen.

THE MOST PROFOUND

change in Barzel's understanding of the *Song of Songs* happened after Barzel moved to Canada in the early '70s to teach Hebrew and Judaic studies. The move meant that she had to leave all of her friends and extended family members behind, and like all immigrants, she found herself in great need of forging connections with others. "Jewish people, being secluded for so many years..." Barzel begins to explain, "I need a sense of connection and belonging. I want to know that I am not alone. The trust in God and in other people gives me the strength to survive every day in this world."

But over time, these powerful new experiences helped her to see the *Song of Songs* in an entirely new light, as a symbol of connection

with others and a love for her friends and community. "My friends and the country that accepted us became wonderful sources of support. My paintings are all about my relationships and communication. The flowers all represent people," she says and adds, laughing, "I talk to my paintings. I know they are ready when they talk back."

However, Barzel's high-spirited floral paintings are more than symbolic portraits; they are, above all, a celebration of everything she treasures in life: friendship, love and the enjoyment of every moment. To achieve this sense of exuberance, she decided to paint this series with her fingers instead of paintbrushes, the

feeling of soft paint between her hands like the gentle touch of a lover in the *Song of Songs*. In the end, the effect is a sensuous exultation of life—an exultation that Barzel sees reflected in the ancient poem that has been woven itself through her life like an invisible thread. "The *Song of Songs* is all about life and love and companionship and understanding, enjoying life and being happy," she explains. "When I read it, it is so uplifting; you enjoy and forget the sorrow around you." ☐

SONG OF SONGS

Paintings by Tslila Barzel • Lando Gallery (11130-105 Ave) • To January 14



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By ROSS MOROZ

ARIES Mar 21 - Apr 18

Thai coffee salesman Prayoon Thongnorn owns a pet crocodile. So thoroughly has he tamed the creature that he lets it sleep in his bed with him, even resting his head on it as if it were a pillow. I predict that you will make a comparable conquest in 2006, Aries. Some dragonish influence that would be risky for most people to harbour will become your ally. Congratulations in advance on both your courage and the ingenuity you will summon to wrestle that beast into submission.

TAURUS Apr 20 - May 20

"We live in a world with too much music," writes Joe Nickell at Missoulia.com. He's bothered by the fact that everywhere he goes, there are tunes pouring from cell phones and MP3 players and TVs and radios and live bands. As far as you're concerned, though, Nickell is utterly off base. In 2006, you should take advantage of the profusion; you should immerse yourself in music more than you ever have before. To do so will be instrumental in helping you accomplish your top assignment in the coming months, which is to feel deep, rich, interesting emotions as often as possible.

GEMINI May 21 - June 20

Many Geminis fit the description of a class of people that *Wired* magazine calls "yuppies," or "young experimenting perfection-seekers." Overwhelmed by a profusion of conflicting opportunities, they are restless and insatiable. They treat life "as an exercise in comparison shopping, refusing to commit for fear of missing a better offer." While this approach is pretty normal for your tribe, I suspect it won't work as well in 2006 as it has for you in the past. That's why I urge you to try out some very different attitudes: a tolerance for imperfection, a respect for limits, an appreciation for the value of peace of mind, and a willingness to concentrate on just two or three possibilities instead of 17.

CANCER June 21 - July 22

The coming months will not be a time for less talk and more action, my fellow Cancerian, but for *more* talk and more action. Here are other prescriptions to help you get the most out of 2006: Go on wilder adventures and entertain fewer superstitions. Indulge in fewer mood swings and invest in an experience that will serve as the best anchor you've ever had. Explore your secrets more aggressively, but keep fewer secrets. Work harder to know the difference between true intuitions and fearful delusions. Feel less remorse and more forgiveness. Cultivate wetter love and dryer humour. Commit yourself to faster promise-keeping and slower fault-finding.

LEO July 23 - Aug 22

I know people who love the feeling of family but who don't have much contact with their parents and siblings and haven't

started their own broods. Instead, they quench their longing for an intimate network by hooking up with a spiritual family—a tribe of like-minded people who share their values. The coming months will be prime time for you to either and a group like that or, if you already have one, to deepen and expand your web of connections. You don't have to sacrifice your relations with your biological kin to do so. The more family you have, the better your mental health will be.

VIRGO Aug 23 - Sept 22

In her book *Women Who Run With the Wolves*, Clarissa Pinkola Estes talks a lot about fairy tales. As a psychotherapist, she recognizes that the conditions they depict are similar to how the deepest part of the psyche works. A central theme of fairy tale justice, she says, is that it's always a good idea to be kind to people who don't seem important or beautiful or cool. Characters who honor that principal are invariably rewarded, while those who spurn it are punished. This will be a key idea for you in 2006, Virgo. You can't afford to dismiss those you consider your inferiors, nor should you demonize the less attractive aspects of your own nature. Your success will hinge on the care you take with underdogs.

LIBRA Sept 23 - Oct 22

I have selected a quote by Irish playwright Brendan Behan to serve as your motto in 2006. I suggest that you write it out on a piece of red paper and place it in a prominent place like your bathroom mirror or computer monitor. "If you have a talent, use it in every which way possible," said Behan. "Don't hoard it. Don't dole it out like a miser. Spend it lavishly like a millionaire intent on going broke."

SCORPIO Oct 23 - Nov 21

Widely regarded as a top military historian, Martin van Creveld has written books that have been influential in shaping modern theories of warfare. The U.S. Army makes his work required reading for its officers. That's why it was so remarkable when he described America's invasion of Iraq in 2003 as "the most foolish war since Emperor Augustus in 9 BC sent his legions into Germany and lost them." I urge you to regularly imitate Creveld's example in 2006, Scorpio: speak out in dramatic fashion against the follies that your expertise gives you the right to critique. Drawing on your special experience and knowledge, make rigorous evaluations of the authorities and institutions whose decisions affect your life.

SAGITTARIUS Nov 22 - Dec 21

"Dear Rob: I'm a very analytical person, with a doctorate in nuclear physics and a high-tech job. All my training and business savvy tell me that your astrology column is superstitious bullshit, yet every time I've faced a crisis in the last 10 years, your horoscopes have provided accurate wisdom and counsel when things seemed darkest. On the one hand this makes no sense, and on the other hand I don't care that it doesn't make any sense. Somehow I'm able to draw sustenance from something whose power I don't understand or even believe in. In any case, thank you! — Humble Sagittarian Genius." Dear Sagittarius: In 2006, you Sagittarians will have the chance to benefit from many phenomena that fit the description you applied to my column. Open yourself wide to mystery.

CAPRICORN Dec 22 - Jan 19

Germany and the Soviet Union failed to sign a peace treaty after the global hostilities of the

mid-20th century. Technically, then, World War II never officially ended. This lack of closure doesn't seem to have had any lingering repercussions, though, so I won't worry about it. On the other hand, there are unresolved situations from your past that are still causing you problems. In my astrological opinion, 2006 is an ideal time to finally wrap up all the unfinished business that has been subtly draining you. It's a perfect opportunity for the ultimate karmic cleansing, preferably carried out with grace, gratitude, and generosity

AQUARIUS Jan 20 - Feb 18

In 1503, wealthy silk merchant Francesco del Giocondo commissioned Leonardo da Vinci to paint a portrait of his wife, Lisa. But when Leonardo finished the work, now known as the "Mona Lisa," del Giocondo was so dissatisfied with it that he refused to pay for it. It seems he didn't recognize its value. I offer this as a teaching story for you, Aquarius. Please make sure that when you get what you ask for in 2006, you don't make the same mistake del Giocondo did. Eagerly welcome your dream-come-true, even if it's different from what you expected.

PISCES Feb 19 - Mar 20

In his book *The Disappearance of the Universe*, Gary Renard quotes the counsel of his teacher: "A jet airliner is always going off course, but through constant correction it arrives at its destination. So will you arrive at yours." Remember that advice throughout 2006, Pisces. My analysis of the astrological omens suggests that you will be frequently straying from the path of your highest destiny, and yet that's exactly what needs to happen in order for you to reach your highest destiny. Forced to keep making regular adjustments, you will tone and strengthen your willpower, which is essential to you achieving the goals that really matter.

EVENTS WEEKLY

Fax your free listings to 426-2889 or e-mail Glenys at [listings@vuwweekly.com](mailto: listings@vuwweekly.com)
Deadline is Friday at 3pm

CLUBS/LECTURES

BOREAL ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM 7, 6328A-104 St every Thu (6:30-8:30) • Organic Roots, 8225-122 St every third Thu (6:30pm)

CONVERSATION CAFE Unity of Edmonton Church, 13212-106 Ave • Meeting presented by Rev. Yvonne Racine • Every Tue (1-3pm)

FAMILY RECREATION SOCIETY City Hall Heritage Rm • Lunch and Learn: Rob Papin and Rick Powder show the film *Gang Aftermath* • Members open to any questions and/or on about their program) • Jan. 11 (noon-1pm) • Free

FAYA'S MONTHLY WRITER'S CIRCLE Exhibition • To discuss, share and comment on writing progress, common challenges and and to

EDMONTON RAINBOW BUSINESS ASSOCIATION (422-6207) • An organization for gay men and lesbians in business and their non-gay friends to share business knowledge, learn, make friend and network in a positive, proud space where being yourself is the norm

HIV NETWORK OF EDMONTON SOCIETY 300 11456-Jasper Ave (488-5742) or contact7@hiv-edmonton.com • Programs and support services for people affected and infected by HIV/AIDS and related illnesses. Counselling, referrals, support groups, harm reduction, education, advocacy and public awareness campaigns

INSIDE/OUT U of A Campus • Campus-based organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-identified and queer (LGBTQ) faculty, graduate student, academic, straight allies and support staff • Third Thu each month (fall/winter terms): Speakers

OUR NORTH AMERICA: FROM TURTLE • TO THE SECURITY AND PROSPERITY • SHIP Torv Bda, Basement, Rm 95 • and Democracy, lecture featuring Donald and Jeffrey Ayres

VEGECARIANS OF ALBERTA Riverdale Hall, 31-109 Ave • Happy, healthy, hearty New • a vegetarian/vegan • our own utensils • \$2 (member), \$3

QUEER LISTINGS

AGAPE Faculty of Education, U of A Campus • Sex, sexual, gender differences in education and culture focus group • Contact Dr. Andre Grace (andre.grace@ualberta.ca) for info

BISEXUAL WOMEN'S COFFEE GROUP bwcoffee-group@yahoo.ca • Social group for bi-curious and bisexual women • Second Wed each month (7:30pm)

BOOTS AND SADDLES 10242-106 St (423-5014) • Large tavern with pool tables, restaurant, shows Members only

BUDDY'S NITE CLUB 11726 Jasper Ave (408-6636) • Open daily 9-3, Fri 8-3 • Mon: Amateur strip contest (12:30); DJ Alvaro, Ashley Love • Tue: Free pool, Malebox, DJ Arrowchaser • Wed: Guriz Cone Wild Midnite: with DJ Eddy Toonflash, Mia Fellow, Ashley Love, Yohko Oh-no, guests • Thu: Wet Undies Contest (12:30): with DJ Squiggles, Yohko Oh-no • Fri: DJ Alvaro dance party, male strippers • Sat: Theme parties, leather/fetish dungeon, free pool, pool tournament, DJ Arrowchaser • Sun: Stardust Lounge with Mz Bianca and Mz Vanity Fair (11pm), DJ Eddy Toonflash

DOWN UNDER MENS BATH HOUSE 12224 Jasper Ave (482-7960) • Open 24/7 •

EDMONTON RAINBOW BUSINESS ASSOCIATION (422-6207) • An organization for gay men and lesbians in business and their non-gay friends to share business knowledge, learn, make friend and network in a positive, proud space where being yourself is the norm

HIV NETWORK OF EDMONTON SOCIETY 300 11456-Jasper Ave (488-5742) or contact7@hiv-edmonton.com • Programs and support services for people affected and infected by HIV/AIDS and related illnesses. Counselling, referrals, support groups, harm reduction, education, advocacy and public awareness campaigns

INSIDE/OUT U of A Campus • Campus-based organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-identified and queer (LGBTQ) faculty, graduate student, academic, straight allies and support staff • Third Thu each month (fall/winter terms): Speakers

Series. Contact Kris (kwells@ualberta.ca)

LIVING POSITIVE 404, 10408-124 St, www.edm-livingpositive.ca (1-877-975-9448/488-5768) • Providing confidential peer support to people living with HIV • Every Tue (7-9pm): Support group • Daily drop-in, peer counselling

MADELEINE SANAM FOUNDATION Faculté St. Jean, 8406 Marie-Anne Gaboury (91 St) Rm 3-18 (490-7332) • Program for HIV-AIDS prevention, treatment and harm reduction in French, English and other African languages • Every 3rd and 4th Sat (9am-5pm) • Free (member)/\$10 (membership) • Pre-register

MAKING WAVES SWIMMING CLUB www.geocities.com/makingwaves_edm • Recreational and competitive swimming with coaching, beginners encouraged to participate. Socializing after practices • Every Tue and Thu

MEDITATION 10502-70 Ave (633-6157) • Tranquility meditation, Tibetan Buddhism with Ani Lama Kunsang • am) • Free

MEN TALKING WITH PRIDE Pride Centre, 10010-109 St (488-3234) • Every Sun (7pm): A safe, supportive, confidential discussion group talking about all gay related issues, for men at any stage of coming out • Free • talkingwithpride@hotmail.com

PFLAG Pride Centre, 10010-109 St (462-5958) • Meetings every third Tuesday of the month at 7:30pm • Support/education for parents, families and friends of lesbians/gays/bisexuals/transgenders

PRISM BAR AND GRILL 10524-101 St, back entrance (990-0038) • Lesbian and gay bar/restaurant

THE ROOST 10345-104 St (426-3150) • Open Sun-Thu 8pm-3am, Fri-Sat 8pm-4am • Wed: Amateur strip with Weena Luv, Sticky Vicky, DJ Alvaro • Thu: Rotating shows: Sticky's open stage and the Weakest Link game second and last Thu with DJ Jazzy • Fri: Upstairs: Euro Blitz: New European music with DJ Outlawak Downstairs: DJ Jazzy • Sat: Every Sat like new years. Upstairs: Monthly theme parties with DJ Jazzy; Downstairs: New music with DJ Dan and Mike • Long weekend Sundays: Betty Ford Hangover Clinic Show: Every long weekend with DJ Jazzy • Tue-Thu \$1 (member)/\$4 (non-member); Fri-Sat \$4 (member)/\$6 (non-member); Sun \$2

STEAMWORKS 11745 Jasper Ave (451-5554) • Steam baths open daily (24hrs)

WOODYS 11723 Jasper Ave (488-6557) • Open Daily (noon) • Sat-Wed: Karaoke with Annie and

Tizzy (7-12pm) • Tue, Sat-Sun: Pool tournaments

YOUTH UNDERSTANDING YOUTH Pride Centre 10010-109 St, www.members.shaw.ca/yuy • Every Sat (7-9pm) • An adult facilitated social/support group for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, and straight youth under the age of 25

SPECIAL EVENTS

BRIDAL FAIR 2006 Shaw Conference Centre, 451-8000 • Sun, Jan. 8 (11:30am and 3:30pm) • \$13.50

CINEMA AT THE CENTRE Stanley A. Milner Theatre, 7 Sir Winston Churchill Sq (496-7070) • *Agata and the Storm*, Italian with English subtitles, rating: 14A, sexual content • Wed, Jan. 11 (7pm) • Free

INDIGO StillPoint, 110, 10350-124 St (452-9388) • Movie showing, hosted by Tim Dayne Butcher • Wed, Jan. 4 (7-9pm) • \$5

NEW YEAR'S DAY POLAR BEAR DIP Summerside Beach Club Lake Summerside, 1720-88 St SW (S of Ellerslie Rd), (497-7558/886-8885) • Sun, Jan. 1 (noon) • Participant registration deadline is Dec. 30 (4pm)

NEW YEAR'S EVE DOWNTOWN Sir Winston Churchill Sq • Featuring strolling entertainers, public skating, a street dance, family activities and fireworks • Dec. 31 (9pm) • Free

NEW YEAR'S EVE FAMILY BEACH PARTY: World Waterpark, WEM • Featuring fireworks display, and live music • Dec. 31 (6pm-midnight) • \$64.95 (door, family pass, each additional family member \$12.95)/\$26.95 (door, individual pass) available at the Guest Services Centre, World Waterpark Admissions

A VAUDEVILLIAN NEW YEAR'S EVE Roxy Theatre, 10708-124 St (453-2440) • Featuring Mile Zero Dance, Laurelle and friends circuitry (John Armstrong, Steven Johnson and Ninea), Bill Bourne, Tippy Agogo, visuals by Tim Folkmann and interactive art installations • Dec. 31 (8pm door, 9pm-2am performances) • \$30

KARAOKE

ALBERT'S 9308-34 Ave • Every Tue (8pm): with Prosound Productions

AVENUE PIZZA 8519-112 St (432-0536) • Every

B-STREET 11818-111 Ave (414-0545) • Every Wed-Sun (9pm): with Brad Scott

BANKER'S PUB 16753-100 St (406-5440) • Every Fri (9pm-1am) • Every Sun (8pm-midnight) with Off-Key Entertainment

BLIND PIG PUB AND GRILL 32 St. Anne Street, St. Albert, 418-6332 • Every Thu • Every Wed name that tune

CAMELOT SPORTS BAR 10231-95 St (425-4298) • Every Sun (8pm-12): Hosted by Jeannie

ECCO PUB 9605-66 Ave • Every Mon (9pm): with Sonia, Prosound Productions

FRANCO'S 14059 Victoria Trail (478-4636) • Every Thu/Sat (10pm-2:30am): Debra-Fae

GAS PUMP 10166-114 St (488-4841) • Every Tue/Wed (9pm)

HOLIDAY INN 4520-76 Ave • Every Thu (8:30pm): with Linda, Prosound Productions

JAMMERS PUB 11948-127 Ave (451-8779) • Every Mon (7-11pm): hosted by Peggy Sue

MOJO'S Best Western Hotel, Fort Saskatchewan • Every Fri (9:30pm): with Prosound Productions

NEWCASTLE PUB 6108-90 Ave (490-1999) • Every Tue (9:30pm) with Right Said Ed

PICARDS PUB 10725-104 Ave (428-4386) • Every Wed (8pm): with Christy, Mr. Entertainment

ROSIE'S BAR AND GRILL • Downtown, 10604-101 St (423-3499); every Mon-Sat (9pm): Sun (7pm): with Ruth • **Highstreet**, 10315-124 St (482-1600); daily (9:30pm) • **Old Strathcona**, 10475-80 Ave (439-7211); even: Thu-Sat (9:30pm-1:30am) • **99 St**, 63 Ave; every Thu-Sat (9pm-1am): with Off-Key Entertainment

SANTANA'S • Every Wed (9pm-2am)

SPORTSWORLD INLINE AND ROLLER SKATING DISCO 13710-104 St (472-6336) • Every Tues-Fri (7pm-midnight), Sat-Sun (1-5pm)

SUNSET PIZZA 152, Stony Plain Rd • Every Wed-Sat (9pm-2am)

WHISTLE STOP PUB 24 Ave, 132 St (451-5506) • Every Wed-Thu: with Jeannie

WOODYS 11723 Jasper Ave (488-6557) • Open Daily (noon) • Every Sat-Wed (7pm-midnight) with Annie and Tizzy

YESTERDAY'S 205 Carnegie Dr, St. Albert (459-0295) • Every Tue (9pm-1am): Off-Key Entertainment with Nicole

CLASSIFIEDS

If you want to place your Classified ad in Vue Weekly please phone 426-1996. Deadline is noon the Tuesday before publication.

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artist to artist

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Need a volunteer? Forming an acting troupe? Want someone to jam with? Place up to 20 words FREE, providing the ad is non-profit. Ads of more than 20 words subject to regular price or cruel editing. Free ads must be submitted in writing, in person or by fax. Duplicate ads will not be published, except by mistake. Free ads will run for four weeks, if you want to renew or cancel please phone Glenys at 426-1996/fax 426-2889/e-m office@vueweekly.com or drop it off at 10303-108 St. Deadline is noon the Tuesday before publication. Placement will depend upon available space.

If the HAT fits call for submissions, open to Alberta artists. Deadline: Mar. 15, 2006. For info Ph 461-9028, e-m: daNielle@damseltydesign.ca

Printmaking workshops: introduction to silkscreen; Thursdays, 6-9pm, Jan 26-Feb. 23 Ph 423-1492, www.snapartists.com

Introduction to woodcut; Wednesdays, 6-9pm; Feb. 1-Mar. 1. Ph 423-1492, www.snapartists.com

Introduction to Etching; Saturdays, 1-4pm; Feb. 4-Mar. 11. Ph 423-1492, www.snapartists.com

WALTERDALE WORKSHOP. "Making the Most of Your Audition." Jan. 7 and 8, 2006. Members free, non-members only \$25! 454-8606 to register.

Focus on Fibre Art Association is seeking entries for juried competition/show of fibre art. Deadline: Feb. 10, 2006. Ph Shirley 469-1783.

Printmaking workshops at SNAP Gallery and Printshop in Etching and Silkscreen. Starting soon. Call 423-1492 to register, info.

Call to Enter: ArtsHub Studio Gallery features guest artists. Incl: Proposal; 10 slides/photos; CV; Artist statement. For info Ph Tim 423-2966.

Art classes at Harcourt House: Figurative Sculpture, Drawing and Painting. Ph 426-4180

Music and Performance Artists! www.PunkTV.ca accepting content submissions for shows, video, radio, interviews. artists@punktv.ca/780-914-8747.

musicians

Drummer and lead guitar wanted for alt rock band-original and covers. Must be interested in recording and gigging. 239-7335.

Wanted: lead guitarist for band playing corporate one-nighters (country/classic rock/50s). Vocals an asset. Ph 449-9478.

Guitar player/singer looking for drummer and bass player for punk band. Infl. White Stripes. Ph 919-3933.

Looking for bands to play on Sundays. Rock, blues, alt, Celtic, country etc. Come and see Tanya with demo or ref @ The Atlantic Trap & Gill, 7704-104 St, 432-4611.

volunteer

We can Food Basket Seeks Volunteers:
Opportunity for people on limited incomes to access quality nutritious food at affordable prices. Volunteers needed in the Bonnie Doon area to help process food orders. Ph 413-4525.

Donna Martyn's NDP Campaign team in Edmonton Centre is looking for volunteers with progressive ideas who want to make a real difference in the upcoming federal election. Wide variety of skills and interests welcomed. Call 486-2443.

We believe that all children have a right to grow in families and schools, and that all adults deserve to have real jobs, homes and friends. Call 454 0701 ext 230. See how you can help to open the gate to community living in your area.

Support the Y.E.S.S. annual campaign. The Youth Emergency Shelter, Ph 468-7870.

Inner City Seniors Agency in need of winter clothing. Ph 429-2626.

ESL Tutors urgently needed. Call P.A.L.S., 424-

5514. Help someone learn English as a second language. Training materials provided.

Volunteers needed to assist new immigrants on a first time shopping trip for essentials. Mornings, weekdays. Ph Judy 424-3545.

healthy volunteers required for research studies with the Brain Neurobiology Research Program at U of A. Call 407-3775 or 407-3221. Reimbursement will be provided.

Brain Neurobiology Research Program at U of A seeks individuals suffering from SEVERE PMS for research study. Ph 407-3775. Reimbursement.

Brain Neurobiology Research Program at U of A seeks individuals suffering from PANIC ATTACKS for research study. Ph 407-3221. Reimbursement provided.

Brain Neurobiology Research Program at U of A seeks individuals suffering from SOCIAL PHOBIA for research study. Ph 407-3221. Reimbursement.

Brain Neurobiology Research Program at U of A seeks individuals suffering from POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION for research study. Ph 407-3906. Reimbursement provided.

Volunteers needed to teach English to adult immigrants. Daytime, weekdays. Great Experience! Ph Judy 424-3545.

Volunteers needed to teach simple Canadian recipes to newly arrived immigrants. Occasional Saturdays. Ph Judy 424-3545.

Volunteers Needed to teach conversational English to adult immigrants at a public library. One to two days per week Call Judy 424-3545

If you would like to reconnect with your volunteer cooperation agency, or are looking to connect with other returned volunteers visit www.volcall.org

Become a distress line volunteer. Training classes in January, May, Sept. and Nov. Ph The Support Network, 732-6648. www.thesupportnetwork.com

EXPERIENCING INFERTILITY? WANTED:
Females 18+ encountering infertility for year or more, describe experience of infertility for research study at the U of A. Rachel at 451-9005 or infertilityresearch@hotmail.ca

Canada World Youth-Amazing International Volunteer programs! Youth 17-24. www.canadaworldyouth.org Deadline Jan. 15, 2006.

Donations Urgently Needed for disaster relief in the aftermath of Hurricane STAN - El Salvador & Guatemala e-m: lorena@change4children.org /www.change4children.org

Literacy tutors needed to assist adults with developmental/physical disabilities to acquire basic reading/writing skills. Tutor training, support, materials provided. 1-2 hrs/wk. Various locations. Lily: 432-1137, ext.357.

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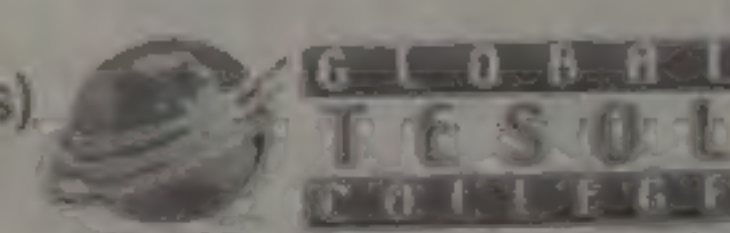
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The Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton is in need of volunteers to take calls on our 24-hour Crisis Line. Hours are self-determined, you can work from your own home. Ph 423-4102

Counselling Services for Canadians of Eastern European Background: The Bishop Budka Charitable Society, 11717-97 St., Ph: 471-5606/471-4477. Fax: 477-0617. e-m: simcisin@yahoo.ca Appointments available day/evening/weekend at home or office. Services in English, Ukrainian, Serbian, Croatian, Polish.

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Unless otherwise specified,
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- the winner must be 18 or older
- prize must be accepted as awarded
- no one may enter any contest more than once
- you may win only once every 60 days
- Vue Weekly reserves the right to exclude anyone from our contests
- no staff, sponsors or members of their immediate family may enter
- the personal information of those who enter will not be sold but may be provided to contest sponsors
- the chances of winning depend on the number of entries received
- by entering, entrants consent to the use of their names by Vue Weekly for publicity
- Vue Weekly is not responsible for prizes unclaimed after 15 days

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alt
sex
column

BY ANDREA NEMERSON

Father's milk

Dear Readers:

You're not the only ones who have questions, you know. My friends have questions, with which they pester me over email and lunch. A longtime friend, for instance, has been peppering me with questions about male lactation, and not for the usual reasons. Since I live in Perverville, Population: Perverts, the usual reasons would have something to do with snakebite kits and nipple-clamps and maybe taking the hormones usually produced in larger quantities by whichever sex happens to be the opposite one. Who ever thinks about using their sex parts for reproduction around here? Well, me, for one, and this friend, for two, although upon announcing the happy news he took pains to differentiate himself from the "We're pregnant!" people, who need to shut up. Sorry, dudes. You can get as involved as any non-gestating partner could possibly be, but you can't go claiming it's actually happening to you. That is a privilege earned by the partner doing the retching, stretching, and weight-gaining. Back off, buddy.

"But what about male lactation," asks my friend. "Have you heard of it? Why do men have nipples, anyway?" That last, by the way, is such a common question that Google answers it 2,630,000 times. Many links are to a book called, unsurprisingly, *Why Do Men Have Nipples?: Hundreds of Questions You'd Only Ask a Doctor After Your Third Martini*, which sounds pretty fun to me, but most are to articles making a serious attempt at answering the question.

My own answer starts with the usual corrective: you have to stop thinking about evolution in terms of "why?" and start asking "how?" Wondering why things are "designed" a certain way will quickly lead you astray. Nobody really knows, I told my friend, but if you ask me, male nipples exist because female nipples exist, and it's often easier to leave an unused organ or function in place, in rudimentary form, than it is to cleanse the developing organism of any vestiges of the extra or obsolete part. Hence, the appendix, the coccyx, and assorted oddball mammalian talents like erectable body hair and wiggle-able ears which are put to

far better use by, say, my cat than by me, but I have them anyway.

Embryos (we are speaking here of standard-issue babies, not the zillion varieties of intersexed or genital-atypical kids who complicate these discussions by insisting on existing) start off with all the equipment they will need to develop a male or a female reproductive system. It's tempting (and earlier feminists were tempted) to say that all babies start off female—"the default sex"—but it's really not true. The baby's genetic sex is set as soon as it picks up that X or Y from Dad; it just doesn't do anything about it until seven weeks in or so, when boy babies start pumping out the testosterone and making bulgy bits, and girl babies don't and start folding in on themselves like a pretty, pretty flower. Of interest here are the mammary ridges, or milk lines, which will become milk glands and ducts, nipples and aureolas. These structures don't wait to develop until after the embryo's sex organs have begun to assert themselves; they're already in place by six weeks, although they'll continue to develop along with the rest of the baby. Why should the embryo exert itself to reabsorb this thing that's not bothering anybody? Leave it alone. It will either develop further later on, under the influence of adolescent estrogen surges, or it won't.

Meanwhile, with the laziness and laissez-faire attitude exhibited by organisms under the influence of evolution everywhere, the milk lines/proto-nipples just hang out. This isn't some human innovation, either. Most (although, oddly, not all) male mammals have something recognizable as nipples. Dogs and cats, you've seen. Male gorillas may not let you get that close, but they, along with the rest of the primates, have plenty nipples. And the male Dayak bat, bless him, uses his.

So, enough of this. I know what my friend really wanted to know, same as what you, weary reader, probably want to know: can he use his? For anything other than fun, I mean? Would you be surprised to hear a "maybe" from me? You shouldn't. Men, it turns out, have the capability, under various extreme circumstances, to produce small amounts of milk. Nobody, to my knowledge, has succeeded thus far in actually nourishing a baby this way (most of the men discussed in articles are ill, starved, or otherwise in *extremis*), but the estimable Jared Diamond, in a fun *Discover* article (http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1511/is_n2_v16/ai_16051177) not only thinks men can, he thinks men will. This seems like sorta bad news for those of us who mildly fetishize sexual dimorphism, but I can't see it being bad for the species, or for exhausted new moms, so I'm all for seeing where it goes.

Evolution: it's like father's milk to me.
Love, Andrea @

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